



EVSTATHIA

or the

CONSTANCIE OF SVSANNA CONTAINING THE PRESER-

vation of the Godly, subversion of the wicked, precepts for the aged, instructions for youth, pleasure with profitte.

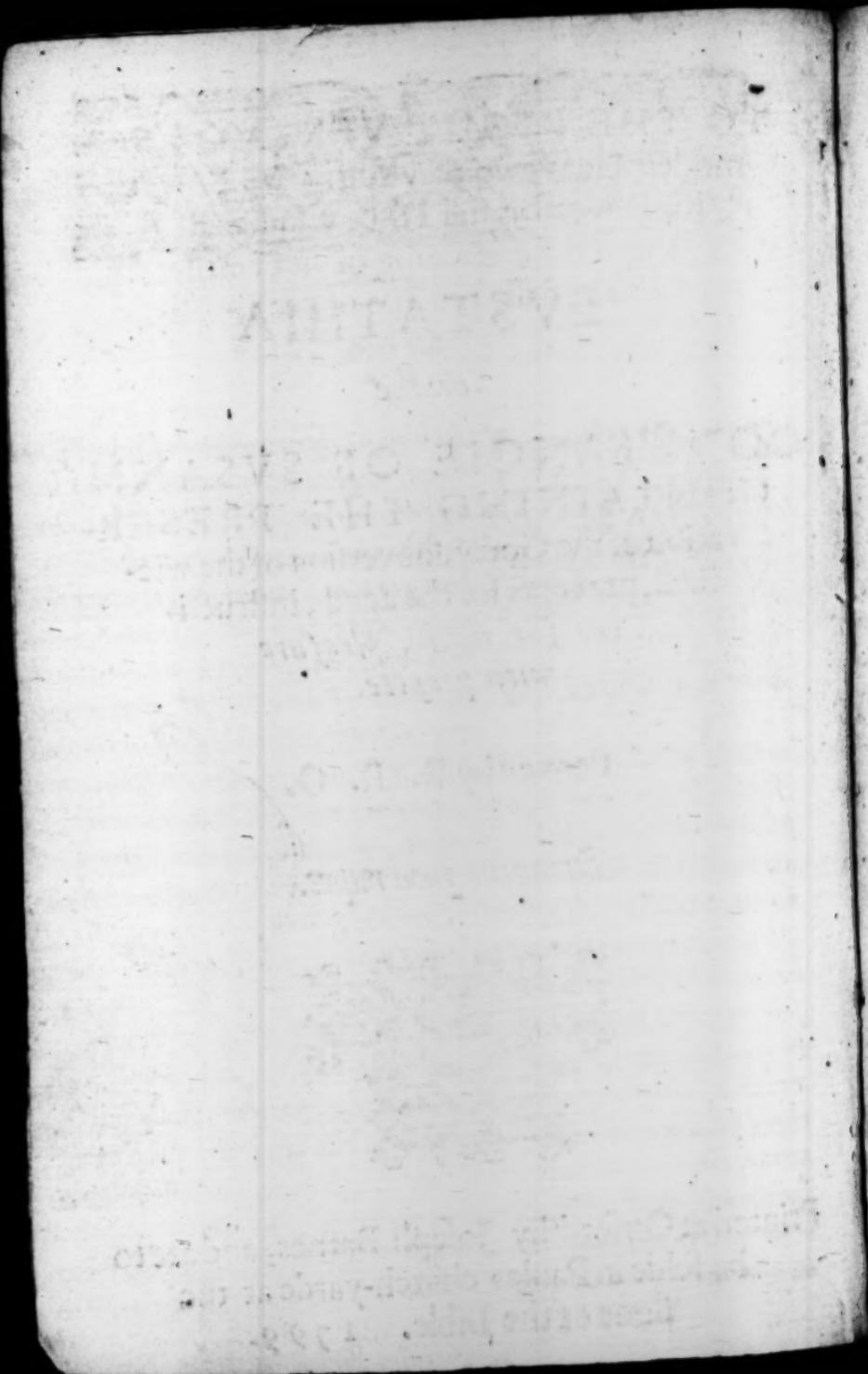
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Penned by R. R. G.

Dominus mea rupes.



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be sold in Paules church-yarde at the
signe of the Bible. 1599.



TO THE RIGHT VERTVOVS AND
modest Gentlewoman Mistris M. B. wife to the
Right worshipfull D. B. Esquier R. R. wi-
sheth the etetnizing of her vertues, by
the daily practise of her christi-
an life.

* *



Lthough (right worshipfull) my longer
silence mighte iustly iudite me either of
ingratitude, or forgetfulnes, in Sen-
caes censure the greater of the two; yet
I not great in fortunes grace, younge in
yeares and not ripe in experience, was
fully resolued to trauele the indelmet,
untill more storr of wealth, graver age,
& greater practise, might warrant me
to performe that indeed which now I can but promise in concepte.
And in that resolution, considering the undigested method was fit
meate for soule-mouthed Momus, and the Rhetoricall dogge, I
determined to make an beriske of this illiterate papplet, & com-
mit it to the fire; but yet respecting the goodnessse of the argument,
the greatness of your vertues, and many thanke-worthy benefites
bestowed both by your selfe, and your right worshipfull husbande I
fell from this faint determination to a second and more sound reso-
lution, Phaeton-like to carry Atlas his burden, and rather to ha-
zarde a faulte in manners then incurre a blemish in nature, ra-
ther (by beeing to bolde) to make you the patrones of so simple a
worke, then by silence to seeme unthankefull. And albeit in per-
forming heereof I shall rather wronge my selfe in bewraying mine
owne weakeesse, then righte your worshipe in yeelding a fit worke
answerable to your uorth; yet my heartes hope is, that as

the christall stome illustrated by the glorious beames doth render
ome (though meane) reflex of the suns immensitie; so my selfe (ex-
posed to your benefites) may heereby make some (though small) re-
turne of your undeserved bountie. And although the treatise
seeme harsh and may dislike you because it came not from Pernas,
sus mountaine; yet I doubt not but you will nourish it for the hill
Syons sake (a speciall obiect of your godly minde) from whence by
induction it is derived. The method I confesse is the more absurd
by reason it was ordered without advice since my comming into the
country where as the Persians used to whittle little stickes to keep
themselves from idlenesse; so my selfe to banish sloath, hauing at idle
hewers basid my head and hand, to whittle out this simple exer-
cise; nothing doubting but that time will one day furnish mee with
opportunitie and practise with sufficiencie to pen a more perfect vo-
lume worthier your vertuous view. And hoping in the meane time
that you (Penelope-like in the absence of your Vlysses) will allow of this,
youe safe the reading, and accept in kindenes what I offer
in dutie, I leane your worshipe to the ancient of daies, to prolonge
your life in all happines.

Your worships vnworthy, yet worthely
bounden, ROBERT ROCHE.





To the Reader.

SV S A N N A heere, walkes forth the way to glory;
To shew her constancie and spotlesse fame,
If any faulte, escape her faultlesse story,
The fault is mine; on me bestow the blame.
Which would her reach, before I could attaine,
Well tuned verse, or moralizing vaine.

Were shee or no; were Ioachim her goodman,
Had Lewes iudicall law, and Sanhedrin,
To iudge of life, in stately Babilon;
Were Daniell hence, first knowne a Sambethin.
Were hee a childe, when hee so well presaged;
Or termed so, compared to these aged.

Were these two segnior shewe, (base slaues to sin)
Achab and Tzidkiya, in Jeremie.
Fell this before, or when full thrall was in;
Or Cirus reigne as some doe vereifie.
Did all things passe, as they haue past the pen:
Or poeme-like to better liues of men.

These things I leane, to iudgement of the wise,
(Gray headed Senate of our grane divines,!)
If I should iudge, I should but preindize,
And with erronious letters, fill my lines.
It me contentes, that well I may avow,
The stories subject, such as most allow.

To the Reader.

Expect not beere, sh' inventum, or the vaine,
Of Lucrece rape, write: or the curioum scan,
Of Phillis friend; or famosus farry-Swaine;
Or Delias prophet, or admirred man.

My chicken feathered winges, no ympes enrich,
Pens not full sum'd, mount not so high a pitch.

Let Colin rearre his flight to admiration,
And traime his lonely flocke, his pipe to follow.
Let Damons reach, ouer-reach all imitation;
And frame melodious hymnes, to please Apollo.
The swaine that pend this pastorall for Pan;
Thought once to end his worke, ere began.

For while I ment, to streigne these sorie noates,
Past Diapent, unto a Diapason;
There fell a chance within our seely coates,
Both great and suddaine; able to amaze one.
When mourning Mopslus cride, leave of thy play,
Shift noates aside, flinge pipe and all away.

Cease seely man; pull downe thy wonted pride,
Enioine thy muse to mourne, and pen to moane.
(As did Amintas, when good Phillis dide)
For thou art quicke forlorne, and left alone.

Sith Thestilis, (thy Thestilis) hath left thee.
While death of greatest iewell, hath bereft thee.

For Thestilis was shee, which too'd thy springing;
Who eake allow'd thee breath, to blow thy pipe,
And idle time to whistle and be singing,
And bred thee vp, till thou were waxen ripe.

Tb' Elixir of thy life, in loue was I shee;
Whose coine did quintessence, thy muse and thee.

To the Reader.

Whose knight-ryd birth, gane blazon to thy blonda,
Whose godly end, doth endlesse heere abide.
Yet wanting her, þou wantest all thy good,
As doth more flockes; the daunces, and lambes beside,
Whom ioyfull Thomas hath good will so vease,
From fruisfull lynes, unto a borter lease.

This uncomy newes, did so my fances lamez;
That though sweete Cynthius, sold me by the eare
My musickie after went in worser frame,
And as my musickie was, such was my cheere,
My looks unly; countenance abased,
Mende make-content; muse weake and overwasted.

Yet did I singe my sorresses to an ende,
(An ende betakes, þe longest tided day.)
And to a verthous patroneff: commende,
My homly verse, and rusticke roundelay.
Whose godly zeale, equivalens with Hanna;
Will us disigne, so countenance Susanna.

R. R.

A 4

C.





Coricæus to the Author.

I seated late, in leasures lappe;
Had leasure to perverse,
Thy Firstling; term'd thy *Susans constancie*
And at the swelling titles
Promise, long did muse.

Which how perform'd, let others iudge (not I)
Who spent my thoughtes, to be thy warning spic;
That iudgement darst provoke, by bolde attempt,
When time from tongues, no writer doth exempt.

While deepe conceited critique wittes,
Of this our daintie time,
Doe like no birdes, but what themselues haue hatched
They loue no pleasant prose,
Are discontente with time.
But what they please, all *Poems* else age patched,
Which humors still, with discontent are matched,
And wayward discontent, the censors bowe;
To quippe they care not whome, they care not how.

Sometimes whole heapes of idle wordes,
(They quarle) are cast away.
Sometimes the matter naked, wanteth wordes.
Sometimes good matters mar'd,
When ill contriv'd, (they say)
Sometimes the sence, a cuffling cause affordes.
Sometimes a sentence, 'or affectate wordes,
A tedious stirre: for in *Philantus* brawle,
There scapes not one; hec hath about withall.

Saith

Criticus to the Author.

Saith one of these; the note is iust,
Mongst men of better note:
Our sharpest wittes, that climbe the sceane of fame,
In vainest follies leese
Thenisclues, and vainely dote.
Doe spend much art, for to deserue much blame,
While they some idle-dreamed phancie frame,
And leaue their workes, a witnesse firme and stable,
VVhat time they lost in hatching of a fable.

Great pittie sure that learned men,
Of great and rare conceate,
Should so these braue habilitie debase:
That while they stretch them out
To proofe, to shew them great;
The praise of their imployementes in this case,
Is voide of praise; and hath this onelie grace,
That they haue wilely tolde, a foolish tale,
And smoothly set a long made lie to sale.

And yet this inconvenience great
Might finde some faire excuse,
If drift of their discourse, at vertue aymed,
For oft in fables foldes
Trimme morall truth doth vse.
But when the worke is matter mereley feigned,
And ende thereof, deserues to be disdeigned.
The writer merites pitie, more then praise,
And worke(vnworthy presse) fit flames to raise.

Thus surelie speaks, this *Censurer*,
And doth his thoughtes revcale,

Coricam to the Author.

(As if some stern Dictator, thundred lawes;
From whom on paine of death,
Vnlawfull to appeale.)

Yet did not well bethinke him in his awse?
For though a story true, doth grace his cause:
He paintes it out with colours of invention:
And giues it wordes, to fit his owne intention,

Which if the Censor vse himselfe,
Thy selfe maist vse the same.
Whose levill ayment at as vertuous end;
And to reduce the worke,
And story into frame;
By reasons rule, the whole discourse is pend,
And hath no cause, the godly to offend,
Or grieue the good: vnlesse some harsh divine,
Against his sacred *Poems* will repine.

An other sort of snarling mates,
Do pester ev'ry age:
Who will be critickes, though they guide the cart.
And censure workes of weight;
Quoat faultes in every page.
Deprave the wittes, of men of best desart:
And iudge of all, by envie (not by arte.)
Who more doth mallice art, then artlesse braines?
Who byteth worse then *Bevins* in his vaine?

High spirited *Homer* (matchlesse man)
A baggage, deem'd a blocke:
And did with bitter tauntes, his workes deface;
Of *Vergilles* daintie vaine,

Could

Cortegians to the Author.

Could *Mevius* frame a mocke,
Inferring that he filch'd his chiefest grace,
By treading in the tract, of *Homers* trace,
Or from the fruities, of *Hesiods* happie braine,
And *Theocrate* the *Syracusan* swaine.

Thus to obscure the meniest crie,
Where deepe-mouth'd hounds doe go;
Each time hath bawling cures, that barke and howle:
Which sith tis so, hath bin,
And ever will be so:
Of learned rest secure, well train'd in schoole,
Thou must not feare, the flout of every foole,
Who in a prating vaine (though thou repine)
Will blaine whole booke, but cannot mend a line.

C. A. R.



An induction to the story.

VHAT time the judge severe, (sin-scourging God)
(Cōpeld to change the course that mercy meit,) Withdrew his favour, and drew forth his rod,
To punish those that knew not to repent:

That time ingratefull *Inda*, iudgement had:
To die or suffer bondage (even as bad.)

For when they scornd, the heav'nly heraldes sent,
To summon them (back-sliders) to the Lord :
Crying with yernefull voice, Amend, repent,
Else hoatest wrath, will follow this his word.

Else will too late repentance plead for grace;
When mercie flies, and iustice holdes the place.

When hardned heartes, could not become so wise,
By others harnes, to learne their owne beware :
While fresh record presented to their eies,
Ten brethren tribes, subdue to slavish care;
Whom the *Aſſirian* monarch, did subdued;
And made of freemen borne, a captiue crue.

When eke they were vnmindfull how their king,
Younge Ieconias, but nine yeares before ;
And thousandes moe : the sanctus blacke did sing.
(What time they did their dismal day deplore)
While captiues thence in bondage led to dwel',
They crying, weeping, schreeching, say farewell.

When princes, rulers, priestes and people base,
Exceeded farre, all heathen in their sin.

When *Sodom* and *Samaria* might give place,
And not come neere, the waies they walked in.

When hameleſſe men, were held of none account,
But he the man that did in finne surmount,

Then

An induction to the story.

Then as a raging flowd, long bent with baies,
Beares headlong downe, what standes before the breach:
Or as rebellious soares, by long delaies,
Recure-less scorne, the cunning of the leach;
Ev'n so: remediless, like raging thunder, (der.
The Lord powrd downe his wrath, long time kept vn-

When whistling for the Bees of *Babel-land*,
Came *Nabuchadnezzar* (surnam'd the great)
And brought with him a most puissant band,
Offsouldiers; skild in every war-like feate.

For as the clustering bees, in swarmes doe clinge;
So flockt the *Chaldeis*, round about their kinge.

Then *Salem* saw, a sad heart-breaking sight;
Resolved foes entrench'd about her walles,
In glittting armout, many a warlike wight,
Most fully bent (what ever hap befallas)
By dint of sword, to winne eternall fame;
Or pawne their liues, in purchase of the same.

But most of all this griefe the conscience gaules;
And ever mates their mindes (so overtaken,
By deepe despaire) to thinke amidst these brawles,
That God for sin, their citie had forsaken.

A matchlesse woe; if God the cause withstand,
A fearefull conscience makes a feeble hand.

Add more to this; the seige so long doth lie,
That famine in the citie is so soare,
The people pine, consaire, doe droope and die;
While horses in the field, haue forrage store.

Death in the house, destruction in the streeete;
Sword in the field, distresse and daunger incete.

Amidst

An induction to the story.

Amidst these woes, the rumbling Echoes sound;
How dreadfull drums, strike vp the fierce allarme,
And ratling trumpe, (with bloody noates rebound)
The valiant heartes, to fell assault doth charme.
When herald first, had summond them to yeeld,
Or to expect, a mercy-wanting field.

Then for supplie, of thundring cannon shot,
Go ram and engine, to the walles (a pace.)
The Pioner he, bestirres him in his plot,
To make huge towers, to giue the souldier place.
On either part, their powers they fully bend,
To giue assault, and from the walles defend.

Ensignes advaunce, and glory scales the fort,
The ladders then are hoysed to the walles,
And honors hope, th'assaylantes doth exhort,
To climb from whence, an other headlong fallcs.

While Archers shoothe, from tough wel-timbred bow,
Their thirled singing shaftes, as thicke as snow.

When once the eager souldier, hath made way,
Within the walles; and might commaund the towne,
Then as a hungry Lyon for his pray,
He rangeth, rageth, killeth, knocketh downe.

Then might be seene, (like stremes to make a flood)
The streetes and channels, flow with crimson blood.

The bedlem handes, do deale foorth murtring blowes,
The victor rageth restlesse, (Lyon-like)
While mercie craving vanquish'd, pleades his woes,
To him that hath no eares, but handes to strike.

The maid, the wife, is subiect to this rage;
The suckling, babe and he that stoopes for age,

An induction to the story.

For as the mower, with his keene edg'd sickle,
Cuts downe aswell the greene, as seeded grasse;
Evē so the souldiers sword, (though teares downe tricke)
Permitteth not a breathing soule to passe.

He spareth none that happen in his way;
Faire wordes, chaste lookees, entreaties, beare no sway.

Then sounded foorth, the screitching griseely crie,
Of slaughtered soules; and many a deepe fet groane,
Of such as murthred, yeelde the ghost and die,
From wounded lungs, yeelding a hollow moane,

While manly men, that whilome stoutly stooode,
Dismembred now, lie weltring in their blood.

Then might be heard, and seeue with wofull eies
The living soules, lamenting for the dead;
Powring out plaintes, with sobbes with sighes and cries.
And bitter teares, as bleeding heartes might shed.

The old lament, long life to be forlotne,
The young repent, that ever they were borne.

The wife shée soundes (and yeeldes her vitall breath)
To see her husband die (in wofull case)
The husband feeleſ a fit, far worse then death,
To see his wife defild, before his face.

And seely babes, (poore heartes) to perish this,
That never did offence, or thought amisse.

The mourning mothers, rugge, and hale their heares,
To see their slauhtred seede, remedileſſe.
The children bath their cheekes, with bloody teares,
To see their wretched parentes, in distresse.

While help-leſſe handes, doe trust vnto their feete,
And leaue poore infantes, crawling in the streete.

An induction to the story.

For now the men of armes, were fled by stealth;
And every soule was left, to shift for one.

Counsaile did want; regard was none of wealth,
Of kin, or friend, or who were left alone.

Who makes not hast, death and destruction seeles,
The happiest wight, doth shew the swiftest heeles.

When souldiers slaughtring sword, embrewd with blood,
Found not a man, that durst resistance make:
Then bedlem minde, gan grow to milder moode,
(If mildnesse be as bad a course to take)

For now vnbridled lust, at large doth stray;
And prowles about, for pillage, and for pray.

Had chast *Lucrecia*, dwelt amongst those dames,
Full many a *Tarquin*, would haue wrought his will.
Had good *Susanna*, wandred in those flames,
Her spot-lessle corpes, had bin constrain'd to ill.

While seely lambes, the chasteſt, and most iuft,
Became a pray vnto a peyſantes lust.

The matchleſſe vessels, of magnificencie,
The temples treasure, (many a millions mate)
The wealth, of *Zedechias* excellencie,
The riches of his Lordes, and men of state:
These things were ſent away to *Babilon*;
As fit for *Nabuchadnezar* alone.

What else was left, of Jewels, gold, and plate,
Amongſt the meaner ſort, (which might be much)
Each ſouldier held, what ſo there of he gate;
While they with other ſpoiles, themſelues enrich.

And when the pilſing hand, had his desire;
The reſt was left, to be conſum'd with fire.

An induction to the story.

Then climbs the furious flame, the stately tower;
Each prickeledge, doth give the souldier place.

The pioner spares, nor temple, house, nor bower,
The time is spent, to spoile and to deface.

There was not left one monument of fame,
Which did not feele the force of burning flame.

The Heav'n-like house, the temple of the Lord;
The worldes eie, and onely worke of name,
Whom once he did delight, but now abhord
Is rayled downe, and robbed of that fame.

The walles also, that hem the citie round,
By might of men, are ev'ned to the ground.

The seely captiues, that had scap'd the sword,
And were reserv'd as *Trophies*, of the spoile;
Hange downe their heades, and cannot speake a word,
Or sound adue vnto their native soile.

The servantes loath, to see the masters face,
The subiectes grieue, to weigh the princes case,

Whom haplesse king, flight could not yeeld reliefe,
But as the deere, before the nimble dogge,
He was enforst, to stoope vnto his griefe;
And for a crowne, to were a heavie clogge.

What time his sonnes, once slaine before his face,
He had his eies put out, with great disgrace.

And so blinde captiue, led to *Babilon*,
To be a bondman to his dying day?
He left the royll seate, of *Salomon*,
And now must leauie commaunding, and obey.

Since he that was impyring prince before,
Is now a fellow prisner, and no more.

An introduction to the story.

Amongst these fetred troopes, of thralled states,
You must suppose transported with the rest,
Helcbia, Ioachim, and those tragicke mates,
VVhose natures, not their names are heere exprest:
Were *Susan* borne, or no, (their glories shine)
Vnknowne, it wantes a *Densus* to divine.

But *Daniel* then, past twenty yeares of age,
In *Babilon* was growne to great regard.
Offame in court; the mighty monarches page,
Dreame secreat *Seear*, and renowned *Bard*.

VVhich knowne; I leaue both story and my skilt,
Vnto your courteous censure, and goodwill.

EVSTA.



EVSTATHIA
or the
CONSTANCE OF SVSANNA
CONTAINING THE PRESER-
vation of the Godly, subversion of the wic-
ked, precepts for the aged, instruc-
tions for youth, pleasure
with profitte.

WHen Chaldean glory, late in whinged throe,
Of flying Fame; (which far and neere doth wader)
In Asian soile, in stately Babylon,
The worldes monarch, and the earthes commander;
VWhat time no humane forces, might withstand her.
Then did stout Syria stoope, and Egypt bov,
And Iuda bend, before her frowning brow.

Then princely peeres did ducke, and doe her dutie;
Then raisd shee in the aire, sky-kissing towers;
Then did the circled earth, admire her beauty;
Then dwelt there in her braue, and matchlesse bowers;
The hight and sovereigntie, of worldlie powers.
VWhose seife-ruled handes, did sway the scepter royall,
That kingdomes kept in awe, and subiectes loyall,

Standing this tipe, offading maiestie,
There dwelt vwithin, this state-commaunding towne,
A Jew; (a man of passing modeſtie)
Helebia hight; and he of good renoume,
Right worthy (for his wit) to weare a crowne.

VWho tooke to vwife, a faire and louely dame;
VWhose godly life, gaue glory to his fame,

The constancie of Susanna.

or as the ringe (compact by curious art)
of it selfe, right seemely to the eie;
but when the *Saphire*, is his true conserue,
There doth appeare, a fuller maiestie:
Her vertue so, his fame doth beautifie.
Her husband was esteem'd, among the states;
And decked with her glory, in the gates.

rom which chaste roote, in time did spring a rose,
Susanna cleapt; not borne to eate her foode,
nor make dandling, that must feele no blowes.
Her parentes care, was how to teach her good,
And to invest her minde with modest mood:
Their reason, fond affection had exilde;
Not bent to make an idoll, of their childe.

ometimes the godly mother (matron-like,)
With rod in hand, to keepe her babe in awe;
With settled looke, and grace demure and meeke,
Would teach her childe, the precepts of the law;
And make her imitate, what so shee saw,
In comely iesture, seemely gate, and guise,
That vse might manners make and doctrine wise.

And as sweete *April* showers, make *Flora* flourish;
o her kinde father, carefull for his ioy)
With choice preceptes, doth vertue feed, and nourish:
That grace might freely grow, without annoy,
And natures weedes, keepe vnder and destroy.
Whereby it came to passe; at bed, and bord,
There past no ill-spent time, or idle word.

And

The constancie of Susanna.

And carefull man, he led by meere remorse,
VWhen booke had rest, and needle leauue to play;
Doth entertaine her thoughtes, with some discourse,
From Adams age; vntill that present day,
And oft recountes, *Ierusalem's* decay.

Whilst eke by cunning art, *chorographie*,
He doth present, the citie to her eie.

These lines (saith he) describe it triplewald,
Aleph, the plot, where stooде the temple great.
Beth, *Sion* castle, (*Davids* citie cald)
Guimell, the *Senate* house, and iudgement seate,
Daleth the market place. *He Marshad* streate.

And so by letters, of her *Alphabet*,
He pointeth out, where every place was set.

And streete by streete, recounteth till he came,
To say heere stooде my, there he (speechlesse then)
Could not pronounce (*my house*) teares stopt the same,
Whilst from his hand, he flungs he pointing pen,
And falling from his matter, vnto men;
He curseth both the auctors, and the sin,
The breeders of the bondage, he is in.

For while (sweete *Sus*) saith he we feard the Lord,
And did his lawes, and sacred hestes obey;
So long he was our shield, our speare, our sword,
Our castle, fort, and bulwarke day by day,
Philisbin, *Ammon*, *Egypt*, beare no sway.

Not *Affur*, nor fell *Syrian* with his bandes,
Or sun-burnt *Ethiop*, could subdue our landes.

The constancie of Susanna.

But vwhen our rulers all, vvere out of rule;
VVhen prince, and priestes, and people, everychone,
VVere irreligious (like the lust-led *Mule*)
Pleased in sin, and vile pollution;
Then kindled vvrath; then vvas our vvoc begon,
Then did he giue vs over, for a pray;
In Chaldean noates to sol, fa, weale avvay.

Yet though he hath vs bruz'd, vve are not broken,
Or left as out-castes in the eies of men;
Sith by his spirit-taught prophets, he hath spoken,
That at the end, of threescore yeares and ten,
Our seed shall sit, in Sion gates age'n.

Thy selfe but young maist liue to see the day;
Our stooping age, hath hopelesse natures nay.

Meane time, liue mindefull of thy latter end,
Thou maist die young: once old canst not liue long,
Content thy selfe in state that God doth send,
In svweetest ioies expect some sovver among,
The vvordes svweete smiles, are as the *Syrens* song.
And humaine pomp, is as a vvhirling blast,
Soone gone, and faunce recall, vwhen once tis past.

Yea man himselfe, is as a raine-bred bubble;
VVhose shape though it be like, t' *Hemispher* sky;
Yet if a vvindy blast, the vvater trouble,
It doth revert, to vvater by and by,
And leaues alone, the vaine beholding eie.
Such is *Susanna* deere, thy present state,
A shade, a dreame, a vvriting vvanting daie.

The constancie of Susanna.

Learne then syueete soule, to loath things pleasing vaine,
Learne then to loue, thy soules long lasting health,
Learne then to knowv thy God, and him to gaine.
VVhich vwell thou maist, if first thou knowv thy selfe,
(VVhich is indeede, more peere-lessle far then pelfe)
Seeme lessle to none, then to thine ovyne concept,
Selfe-loue(a servile foe)on fooles doth vvaite.

Embrace Gods promises, hold fast thy hope,
Measure thy life, by line of sacred law,
Containe thine actions all, vwithin this scope,
Be not secure: but standing stand in avve,
Least thine affections, thy zeale vwith-drawv.
And still(syueete loving lamb) in age and youth,
VWith stedfast constancie, professle the truth.

Yeeld vs thy parentes, ay a lovvly heart,
In guerdon of the loue vve beare to thee,
Offend not friendes, let betters haue their part,
Be carefull of thy name, as of thine eie,
Let loue of fame, prevent all infamie.

Ill company avoide(as from the divell)
If thou vvilt free thy life, and aCTes from evill.

Remember(vvench) thou readest in thy booke,
Ttwo thinges; the ornamente of mayden head.
To haue a shamefast eie, and sober looke,
And other ttwo(if that thou hap to vved)
Good name, and chastitie, to bring to bed.
Assure thy selfe, the owner of these fower,
Is godly faire, and hath a vvorthy dover,

The constancie of Susanna.

Delight not(childe) in braue and rich aray;
To prune thy selfe, as if thou were imprented.
Besemely, not a slut : be graue, not gay,
With cleanly comelinesse, be still contented.
Be not fond sick, with fashions new invented.

For,tis but superfluitie of pride,
To haue a fashon-coyner,for thy guide.

Excessiue neatnesse, is a badge of evill,
An antigne, of a light vnstable head,
An angling hooke, and engine for the divell,
To catch such fooles, as are by fancie lead,
A moath that fretteth, till thy wealth be dead.

VVhile backe dore make, the belly to be sterved;
VVhich matrons eie should see to be preserved.

Then is shee cald,a huswife, (comely dame)
(Whilst cleanly fine, is voide of curios partes).
Then which in time, was not a better name.
VVhen golden world,did want prides painting artes,
VVhen plaine content, possest the country heartes.
VVhen hospitalitie did feele no lacke,
And was not climbde, from table to the backe.

If that thy neighbours doe possesse good name,
Doe thou not envie,at their worldly blisse.
Nor be thou light,to credite every fame,
Reportes doe often hit, and often misse,
Of all thinges iudge the best,for best it is.
VVith sober looke be courteous vnto all,
VVith few familiar be, or none at all,

The constancie of Susanna.

Hide not a wanton heart, with modestie,
Say not thy Psalter, in the divelles booke.
Take heede beware of such hypocrisie,
(He is no saint, that saintishnesse forsooke).
Be more severe in life, then in thy looke.

And when thine eares haue heard what other say;
Allow thy tongue a bridle and a stay.

Learne good things, with good vwill; instruct the weake,
Comfort the comfortlesse, in their distresse,
Stop not thine eare, when pining poore doth speake,
Hate with thine heart, sin-breeding idlenesse,
Let thrifty minde, be free from all excesse,
Crave not too much; if riches once arise,
Obserue a meane, and let inough suffice.

And if thou covet, honest exercise,
Then read good bookeſ, ſuch as our *Rabbies* pen,
Or vſe ſuch dames, as well can matronise,
With honest mirth, amongſt the godly men,
With due regard, of ſeemely where and when.
And to conclude; where ſo thou hap to dwell;
Loue thou thine house, as ſnaile doth loue the ſhell.

Thus did *Helebia*, (painefull father) teach,
His *Susan* deere; sweete obiect of his eie;
Her mother daily, ceased not to preach,
The like preceptes, of grace, and modestie,
And oft would heere, how well ſhee would reſtie.

What time her heart, rejoiced for to ſee,
So witty anſwers, with like guife agree.

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhile shape did hold, Symmetricall estate;
(Her manners mated vwith a gallant grace)
Her beauty, feature fine did emulate,
VVith speech composed, and vwith sober pase.
And this decorum fitting in her face;
The whole and partes, resembled and were like
To perfect numbers, in *Ariahmetiske*,

And shee thus trained, from her tender yeares,
Became in time to reape her iust renowne:
In all respectes, so far surpast her peers,
Of equall age, and vwealth within the towne,
That every vway, her praises put them downe.
Whilst wantons bent, to play, and idle pleasure;
Shee train'd her thoughtes, to lecke eternall treasure.

Whereby it came to passe, that envie fell,
Pursuing vertue, with great eagernesse;
When they could not come neere, began to swell,
And with fine tauntes to make her praises lesse.
Some said, the mayd, would proue a prophetesse.
The booke-wise vvench, will yeeld a deepe divine,
Or of a saint, will hardly make a shrine,

But godly graue, that best doth iudge and say,
Did deeme her right, a worke of rare perfection:
A peerelesse peece, to be a princesse pray,
One *Angel*-like; a vessell of election,
Whose shining fame was free from deathes infection,
Though her time-fading beavty, dead doth lie,
Which did surmount each feature scene with eie.

Why

The constancie of Susanna.

Why didst thou beauty fade? vvhyl didst thou vvither?
O budding Rose, why didst thou ever blast?
Why didst thou proue vnconstant, as a feather,
In her whose constancie did stand so fast?
Sure, twas to teach vs nothing heere doth last.

For else thou wouldest haue liv'd, with *Susans* names,
And as a handmaide, waited on her fame,

Whose shape splendiferous vvas, in each mans sight,
Whose looke gaue argument of sober grace,
Whose eies (two twinckling starres) nev'r proved light,
Whose silent tongue knew well, fit words to place,
Whose faith so firme, that nothing could deface.

Though two great seniors sought, to blot her brow,
And to their lure, to make her chast soule bow.

O that such peerelesse splendor, should haue wrong;
And be entised, vnto lawlesse lust.
Not *Iuda*, but false *Iudas* doe long,
Pure chastitie, to cast into the dust,
But leaving heere, those matters vndiscust.

You heard her life, first wained from the lappe,
Now doth ensue, the processe of her happe.

When trust-lessse time, by his swift-footed pages,
(Cleap'd; minute, hower, day, weeke, the month & yeare)
Had brought her past, her two first sevens of ages,
And set her in th' ascendant, of her sphere;
And nature now gaue summons, to draw neere.

In nuptiall court, to yeeld expected homage,
Since that in bar, shee could not pleade her nonage.

Then

The constancie of Susanna.

Then scruple-finding, stickler vnto strife,
Propones her bashfull thoughtes, this bold discourse;
Twixt barren mayden-head, and bearing wife,
VVhich of these two did stand, in greatest force,
For with the best, shée meant to shape her course:
Whilst in pure conscience court, where her soule late,
Her pleading thoughtes, it argue and debate,

Like Hebrew disputantes that had bin trained,
In Moses schoole; (at some *Gamaliels* feete)
And were not yet to christian lore reclaimed,
Sometimes they argue, mariage is most meete,
Sometimes (*& contra*) spider-sucke the sweete.

VWhile lotted fences, are so few-beguiled,
To deeme the mariage bed, a thing defiled.

At her heartes bar, these silent virgin pleaders,
VVith soaring high conceites, as highly rated;
Far fet their petegree, from stately leaders.
Pure *Angell*spirates; virgins (ere man) created,
VVhose active life, no *Angell* ever mated.

While victory of virgins, doth excell,
Which vanquish their owne flesh wherein they dwell.

Each other iarde not long suspended hanges;
An hower, a day, a yeare, doth stint the strife,
Blud-died martyrs, soone do passe their panges.
But this fell battle dureth, during life.

Heere daily striving; victory not rise.

So matchlesse is, by antique rare dissent,
The mayden life; and glorious vanquishment.

The constancie of Susanna.

Yea auncient *Adam*, (*Iohvaes protoplast*)
Was moulded of his mother, mayden birth.
And old dame *Eva*, to cominend the chaste;
Of virgin rib, was fram'd a mayden birth.
Iust *Habell* liv'd, vn marryed heere on earth.
Melchisedeck also (our *Rabbins* tell)
Did virgin, preist, and kinge in *Salem* dwell.

The wonder-workinge prophettes, most offame,
The *Thesbite*, and the *Abel Mecholite*,
(The one transumpt to heav'n in fiery flame)
Do shew how god, doth virgin life delight.
Fore-seeinge *Esay*, where hee doth endite,
Messias birth, a maidens son doth make him,
And sure I am, his ay me doth not mistake him.

The thinge wee prayse, is mynion to this kinge.
The iustice, which the iustest iudge, approveth.
Vowd to the Lord, a secret, holy, thinge.
Sacred to God, as such a state beehoveth.
And for bycause, her contrary shee loveth.
Shee alwayes maryed lives, a spowfed wife,
Yet evermore a mayd, in single life,

Whose life is termd, the *Angels* imitation.
And therefore is hir figure, *Angel* faced.
Shee mowntes to heaven, by wings of contemplation,
And therefore is shee paynted, stately pased.
And for bycause, like Goddessesse shee is graced.
Her traine is trod, with troopes of vertues nighnesse,
Like maydes of honor, neere a princesse hightiesse.

VVhos

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose robes (the spotlesse flesh integritie)
Do emulate, the white spot *Ermelin*,
A trophie of vice-quellinge victorye,
The brannchinge palme, hir fingers clasbeth in.
The wimple that slice weareth on hit chin.

An ant-signe is, of bashfull modestie.

Her humble minde, declares her stoopinge eie.

The Gentiles hence, in their high observations,
Compare chast *Pallas*, Goddesse in their heaven,
To yeeld true maiden life due commendations
(Vnto the full, and misticke number seven)
Compacted of two numbers, od and eaven,

Th' entire and incorrupted vnitie)

VVith six the secrete of virginitie.

For what content, but in the maiden life.

VVhose fleet, wingd thoughts, ar free to serve the Lord.

VVhose mal-content, if not the maried wise.

Careful to please grim sir, at bed and bord.

VVith best obedience, in hir deede and word.

And so mans service is then Goddes more geason.

Thus on the virgin part, her thoughtes do reason.

And to amase her weake, and pusill minde,
In creepe through crannies of imagination.

Deformd *Ideas* formes, and phansies blinde.

Sent foorth by hir sicke fences, instigation.

Like staringe greisly fendes, threatninge invasion.

Presenting to her heart, the homely iarres.

And household cares, accurringe nuptiall warres.

The constancie of Susanna.

Base mariage (say these bugges) is rife to all,
Braue virgin life a perle possest of few.
The feild found *Sagda* stroane, though it bee small.
Exceedes huge rockes that make more often shew.
VVhat recknings made, of recklesse drops of dew.
Rare things are in request, and do surmount,
VVhere common, base, and vile have none accouut.

Perhaps some worldling, will thee woo for wealth,
And talke of love, when heart by lust is galled,
Pleases his playn-dealing, steps not in by stealth.
Vowing thy vertue, hath his heart enthralled.
When as thy beautie, fitteth their enstalled,
VVhile mucke (not modestie) hath him bewitched,
VVith honor kin, or friends, to bee enriched.

And so when causes, of his suite decay,
Lustfullly gordgd, with lothsonnesse infected,
Fine beautie fled, false riches runne away,
The causes gon, for which thou were elected,
Th'effectes fal downe, and thou art then rejected.
VVhat better hope, or hap may bee maintained,
Of better rightes, why mariage wasordeined.

If that thou wed, to tame flesh kindled sin,
The fault is doubled, if thou fall away.
If to increase, and multiplic thy kin,
Thou shalt for loathed plesure, deerly pay,
VVe but report, what maryed folkes do say.
Childe-getting vadinge ioy, is in their creedes,
A raging toy, that rash repentance breedes.

VVhen

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhen once the fruitfull wombe, hath seede conceived,
The altred woman, seemes not what shée vvas;
But growes vnweildy, groning and agrieved,
As one surcharged, with some weighty masle.
Like Balams bearing Angel-frighted Asie;
No sence, no signe, no pulse, no part, no passion,
But that it feeles some perfect alteration.

Some giddy vapour, doth infest her braines,
And with his foggy misling dims her sight.
Inflates the secret Artires, and the vaines,
Dies dusky coloured, what before was bright,
Each seemely part, lesse seemely shewes in sight.
While heart(poore heart) forefeeling passions great,
With frightened panting pulse, doth thumpe and beate.

The prety Ivory hilles(the maiden pappes)
Powt now with paine, to feele chaste flesh defiled.
The nibled teates, that perch vpon their toppes;
Yeeld mayden blush, to see themselues beguiled,
Their freedome fled, their liberties exiled,
Must now be tugging stockes, for tootlesse chaps,
And subiectes liue, to myriads of mishaps.

Chast loines by lawlesse lust; are martyred,
The brest doth feele, short breathing sympathies,
The bowels by defect, are tortured.
In weakened backe, do crickes and crampes arise,
What swellings feele the feete, the legges, the thighes?
While seemely wast(that all the members graced)
By strouting wombe, is stretched and defaced.

Yea

The constancie of Susanna.

Yea vvhile sound appetite,did hold his seate,
There sick abhorfulnesse,hath built his bower.
Fond lust doth long,for sundry sortes of meate.
Sometimes it loathes the sweete, and likes the sower;
And oft yile things,with eagernessee devour.

Or else is subiect,to such qualmes and fits,
As doe deprive the sence, and dull the wits.

And thus the body,by a bodies breeding,
Becomes disgrased,plethorique,oppreſſed,
Faintes in his faculties,erres in his feeding,
Fluds of defecates,beare downe poore health distressed,
VVhich dangers with more danger are redressed.

VVhile nature these,(and many mo presages)
Appointed hath,birthes,hand attending pages.

And yet perhaps,conceived hath this wife,
No perfect birth, but some vnprefect thing.
A *Mole*(deformed lump that wanteth life)
Which direfull death,remedilesse doth bring,
Or during life,doth yeeld a deadly wring.

Againe if womb,be subiect to abhorsion,
Best hope is bankrupt,by the ſame extortio[n].

Yea vvhile fine mettall,hath deformed mould,
Or makes a fault,in little or too much;
Or is not of the kindred,that it ſhould,
Then nature in true working,keepes not tuch,
But frames the ſeely creature,to be ſuch.

As vvas the mowld;the mettall,or the minde;
A minotaure,a mongrell out of kinde,

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhy should we name, the deadly panges and throwes,
Heart-pinchng paines,companions of the birth?)
The sowning fits, the weale-awayes and woes,
The broken sleepes,sad dreames depriving mirth,
The little ease,when once the infant stirth,

VWhom seeming'y,paine suffering mother feeles,
To teare her tender fides,with thumping heeles.

Let silence have, the nightly paines in noursinge,
The cradles rockes, the wrayling brawling cries.
The dayly chardge,in buying, and disbursing,
To bringe it vp, and yeeld his want supplies.
The hastned age, the breedinge bodie buies,

VWith millions moe, of houshold cares and strife,
That do attend, the happiest maryed wife.

But if to cloake,their folly with devises,
They set the gaine of fruit, against this thorne,
They buy bad wares, at to excessive prices.
For if the climbinge weed, pull downe the corne,
The parentes wish luch seed, had not bin borne.

And equall greife,doth dim(hearts lamp) the eie,
To see the bad to live, or good to die.

Of whichfayre bitter sweets,toyle borne, and bred
The husbandes part,ofte standeth in conceipt.
VVhen lawlesse lust,polluteth lawfull bed,
The fathers picture, proues a counterfeit,
Some times discent, is patched by deceit,

VVhen cradle rockes a chaunglinge foysted in,
Deserves myc here, defraudes the lawfull kin,

The constancie of Susanna.

But deeme the best, and counte them all their owne
Vnhad, they ar not theirs, when they would have them,
And once possest, their title then is knowne,
Not theirs, but his, the mighty Gods that gave them.
VVhich can in youth, or age, or wombe ingrave them.
Thus is the child wifes choyce, perplext and sad,
And better hope, in husband is not had.

Hast thou a pheere, whose faith exceedeth farte?
If him the mighty monarch, doth commaund,
To prove his martiall armes, in feates of warre,
Midst troopes of bedlem foes, in forreigne land:
How comfortlesse, wil thy poore comfort stand,
VWhile carfull thoughtes, will cause thy hart to morne,
Till ioyfull eie enioy his safe returne.

But if thy wedded mate, bee wedlocke breaker,
How much doth matchlesse greife torment thy minde,
If that hee bee a churle, and cursed speake,
It killes kinde heart to see him so vnkinde,
Againe is hee to ielous lore enclined?
VWhat tosse to tie free actions of thy bed,
To fond survey, of his suspitious head.

If he be good, what fearefull thought to leaue him?
If he be bad, what cunning to reclaime him?
If he be kinde, it grieues thy heart to grieue him?
If he be fierce, what wisidome to refraine him?
If he be lost, what pollicie to gaine him?
If he be loathsome, tis thy taske to loue him;
And no redresse, til death from thee remoue him.

The constancie of Susanna,

But our fond thoughtes faith shée, vvhyl do you reason,
Gainst God, my conscience, and the common weale?
Dread heresie, if that you dread not treason.

Be not blind *Effees*, nor so badly deale,
To beate downe mariage, with a virgins veale.

Which were to be injurious, to my birth,
And leaue no man, to tread the trampled earth.

You partiall providers, in affections cause;
~~Y~~owd imipes, that doe conspire, nurle natures end.
You violaters, of Gods first made lawes,
You secta~~r~~y, you foes to mans most friend,
Nice, coy, vnkinde, to country and to kind.

Wast common-weales; and spend your wits in woing,
Loues lost; the churches downefull; mans vndoing.

VVhilſt vnder-mining mariage, with your lore,
You kill the roote, whence all your good began.
The wedded life, of mankinde is the more,
Take mariage from the earth, and vvhile is man?
Man ceasing to haue being; what comes than?

Your owne decay; your death by his decrease,
For when the roote doth rot, the sap doth cease.

As if your earthly being, were too base,
VVith trustlesse vvinges, you sore beyond the son.
To draw dissent, from ancient *Angel-race*,
You spend wind-wasting wordes, and breathlesse ron.
Perdie you must come downe, vvhile all is done.
Kisse mariage hand, your ancient on the earth,
Vnlesse you will, vwith basenesse blot your birth.

The constancie of Susanna.

As vaine you vaunt of *Angelles* imitation,
Angelles full numbred sp[irit]es, doe hue for aie;
But man was made, for fruitfull propagation,
Man must increase, because man must decay,
And to that worke, chalst wedlocke was the way.

To tame flesh treasons, and appease those iarres,
Hels rebles raise, to breedē soule-slaughtring warres.

Againe, if that you hatch your single broid,
In *Eva*:s rib, or *Adams* quickned earth:
Like reason (if it stand with you for good)
For musickes art, like consequence infearth;
Tubulcaines hammers, making maiden mirth.
Tuball from them did frame, mayd *Harmonie*,
Sweete noates consent, hath nam'd her melodie,

What if iust *Habell* choose the virgin life?
And *Salem*s king, did die a batch'ler blest?
What if *Elias*, liv'd without a wife?
And single life, lik'd *Ezreus* best?
What if *Messias*, fucke a maiden brest?
One Autumnne primrose; doth not proue the spring,
One winter swallow, doth not sommer bring.

What if some few, by gift offpeciall grace,
(If God giue not the gift, is nought at all)
Victoriously run out, this virgin race?
Yet many mo in running tooke the fall,
Ev'n when they ment, most finely foote the Ball.
And so haue mist the goale, and to their cost,
Lament too late, things past recovery lost.

The constancie of Susanna.

Ye soone which seeme in shewv, to seeke it most,
In secret heart, proue trevants (treasure wasters)
One seely thought, marres all the maiden bost,
Whiche soone betides, these great tentation tasters,
Ye atis a booke-case, pend by our great masters.

*In vaine chaste flesh a maiden name doth win,
Where yeelding thoughts haue given consent to sin.*

All are not maides, that vow they vvill not wed.

All are not virgins, that are maides esteemed,

All are not chaste, that shun the nuptiall bed.

All are not true *Dianas*, that are deemed,

Chaste *Sara* was not single, when shee seemed.

Abused *Ihamor* wore a virgins weede,

And might haue cloak'd, false *Ammons* foulc misdeede.

A droane doth sometimes in a bees place stand,

The single life, no seale of maiden head,

Some batch'lers be, but traitours in the band,

Worse foes to virgin wealth, then those that wed,

Who when the foe appeares, their force is fled;

Like *Gedeons* host (faint cowarde prone to yeeld)

Scant one of ten, is chosen for the field.

Yet quaint encomiaist-like, with wordes at wil,

You paint them out, with praises at your pleasure,

VWhile making hast, to preconize your skill,

You make the coate, before you take the measure,

And to entize, young tyrons with your treasure,

Like gold-sicke *Alchymistes*, you pamper in,

A golden tincture, on a peece of Tin,

The confancie of Susanna

VVhat praise peculiar, to the thing you paine,
Which fits not modest mariage, more divine?
Yet to canonize, maiden-head a saint,
You put no ods, betweene the saint and shrine,
To make a painted brow, the brighter shine,
You parasite, with praises to her face;
And causlesse clowd, dame wedlocke with disgrace.

Nay rather say; this buxome pleasing wife,
VVhile shee her toilesome fieldes, of household tilleth,
And weanes her children, to a Godly life,
In this her care, the Lordes behest fulfilleth,
Sith that shee doth the thing, his wisedome willeth,
And therefore well, may take the vpper-hand,
Of her, vvhose warrant hath not one command.

Nay rather reason, mariage preservation,
Is lawded, loved, honored, far and neere.
VVhose sacred rightes, haue solemne observarion,
VVhose ancient priviledge, hath not his peere,
VVhose daily fruities, are dainties held most deere.
And adde the cause, for which shee is required;
The most commodious things are most desired.

VVhat if her house, be neighbour to annoyes?
The blame be theirs, (not hers that dwelleth by them)
For if we walke, in faire, and easie waies,
That haue some noysome brambles, growing neare them,
That rent our cloathes, before we can descrie them;
The fault is not in fairenesse, or the way,:
But our owne folly, or the brambles stay,

The constancie of Susanna.

In *Breschith* booke it resteth in record;

(Reporting Register, of mans creation)

That when great *Ihova*, by his powerfull word,

Made shapelesse man, to his owne shape and fashion:

He first gaue nuptiall rightes, for propagation.

As glorious ground-worke, where he vould begin,

That building, which his prescience laboureth in.

And did in blessing, knit this sociall band,

Endowd vwith vworldly empire, and earthes treasure:

Whilst purest nature, did vnstained stand,

In easterne *Eden* (place of passing pleasure)

When giving *Adam* of his *Eve* b'seasure;

Ioind two in one, inseperable vniōn,

To represent him, and his church communion.

Yea vwhen false man, fell to *Apostacie*,

(Misled by *Sathan*, and his owne freewill)

Had spoild himselfe, and plagu'd his progeny,

And chang'd his seas of ioies, for flouds of ill;

The matrimoniall state, continued still.

A mithredate, to cure fius poysned sting,

The *Bezoar* stone, that shoulde healthes blessing bring.

For as a playster, to repell despaire,

(Paine ceasing med'cine, to an aking sore)

God promise made, that *Eve* shoulde haue an heire,

Should bruze hell-serpents head, and make him tote;

And to repaire those ruins added more,

To faithfull *Abr'aw*; when he thus professed,

That in his seede all nations should blessed.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhen eake loves hot-spur, Lamech over bold,
VVith one sweete fayre, could not fowle lust suffice,
But let desire go loose, and vncontrold,
And chose him mates in number to his eies,
VWhilke following age was wedded to his guise.

True wedlocke went to wracke and nature then,
Straunge mixtures, made straung monsters out of men,

It greived God, to see vngatfull man,
Pollute the earth, with rape and ravishment.
VWhile to sweete bayted sin, all headlong ran,
Ne would in time, become true penitent.
Hee like a champion, full of discontent,

VWith wreakful waters, did these wicked waft,
Not one preserued, but the wedded chast.

And as it were a warning, heereto made,
VWhen nature rul d, with law nunenpative)
How sore hee did detest, flesh-mongers trade.
(Fell traytors that do wedlocks wracke contrive).
From Sodoms flames, he kept chast fower alive.

So to preserve, chast Saras bed vnspotted,
Hee plagued kings, whom beautie had bee sotted.

But in the true transcript, of Goddes owne hand,
Transplendant star, how bright doth wedlocke shine.
Hee vnderprops her empire, with command
Dyrectes her lore with lawes, as with a line.
Condemnes to death, her subiectes that decline.

And when her peace is rent, by ielous iarres,
Hee sets the way, to cease her civill warres.

and

An introduction to the story.

And vwhile her lasting glasse of glory ronnes,
He blots her foes faire brow,with fowle disgraces
But doth vouchsafe,to call her children sonnes,
Enfranchizing her fruit,with freedomes mace,
Doth nicker their counterfeit,with name of base.

As slips of sin, and fruities of basest folly,
Whose rooteth out,as seede,vnholly.

And that fierce *Mars*,with sterne and sower aspect,
Should nothing hinder, *Venus* influence,
He *Mars* his might,doth countermaund, and checke.
But gues her power,protection and defence,
In maryed mates,to act benevolence.

When to the Brides faire groome,for loue he spares,
One yeare exempt,from warres and worldly cares.

Even so the nations,led by natures light,
(Din scintilles of the soules *Syntesis*)
Did patronize her peace,with good fore-sight:
And to maintaine,her princely port in blisse,
Restrain'd with lawes,wild lust that walkes amisse.

Denouncing death,or danger to her foes,
That darst,against their states friend,themselues appose.

Thus hath all times, and tongues, well entertained her,
Gods faithfull servant, and mans fastest friend:
And those condemn'd to shame,that haue disdeign'd her,
And (if I augure right) shall to the end,
When man in vaine,doth gainst the Lord contend?
Ne can the state, or pollititian misse her,
While he for his sweete *Sions* sake,doth blisse her.

YVhose

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose company giues comfort in distresse,
Two heades at neede, yeeld more advice then one:
Two walkers in the way, may falles redresse,
Two bodies sooner warme, then post alone:
Two hands to helpe are better far then none.

How may man misse her comfort (doe her right)
To passe the lingring day, or tedious night?

Shee concord doth augment, by consanguinity,
Sometimes shee standes, the counterpawne of peace;
Shee doth enlarde loues boundes, by new affinitie:
Shee (arbitrating vmpire,) warres doth cease,
Shee still imploies the common wealthes, increase.
Her ympes in youth, are loues sweete pawnes and gages,
To parents staues, to stay by in their ages.

VVhose house is held, an *Academie* royall,
Heere *Faith* by doctrine, hath due exercise.
Heere *Duetie* biddes, her children to be loyall,
Heere *Patience* prest, if that extremes arise,
Heere *Lone* in liking heartes, *Hope* never dies.
Heere *Fortitude*, repelles faint feares offence,
Heere *Mercie* doth, with many a fault dispence.

Heere *Gratiende*, giues guerdon with good vwill.
Heere *Constancie*, doth checke false wavering *Fame*,
Heere *Humble* minde, doth take nor doe none ill,
Heere *Temp'rance* doth, fond lusts entisements tame,
Heere *Chastitie*, is guardian of good name.

Heere *Labour* (Lascies foe) doth keepe true tuch,
Heere *Meane* obserues enough, and not to much.

Heere

The constancie of Susanna.

Heere doth sharpe *Logique*, proue her right with reasons,
Heere *Grammar* traines her ympes, in grounds of speach,
Heere shewes *Astronomic* the starres and seasons;
Heere to accompt *Arestmetick* doth teach:
Heere *Rhetorick*, in bad causes plaies the leach.

Heere doth *Geometrie* worke all in measure,
Heere *Musick* is maintaing, to maintaine pleasure.

Heere *Historie*, doth eternize her actes;
Heere *Poetrie* paintes her never dying fame:
Heere *Natures* clerkes, doe authorize her factes.
Heere *Phisick* stirs, to keepe her health in frame,
Heere *Lawiers* plead, the charter of her name.

Heere *Sophistes* (though like newters standing mute,
Yet) doe not dare against themselves dispute,

Heere sits *Compassion*, porter at her gate,
Prudence purvys, her plenty and her store,
House-keeping *Care*, is steward to this state.
Her liberall hand, is *Almner* to the poore,
Religion leades her life, directes her lore.
Good-order standeth vsher, in her hall,
Injustice controwles, if ought amisse doth fall.

Within her courtes, attendeth on her traine,
The high, the low, the noble and the base,
The stately monarch, and the statelesse swaine,
Priest, prophet, patriarch and the princely race,
The troopes of warlike gallantes, preffe for place.

All times, all tongues, all nations farre and neare,
With duties knowledgement, are present heere.

The constancie of Susanna.

No law, no learning, science art, nor skill,
No craft, no cunning, knowledge, or invention,
No state that was, or that continueth still,
No trade, no misterie, that man can mention,
But that it guardes her gates, with good intention,
And when shee passeth by, with seemly greeing,
All bow the knee, and thanke her for their beeing.

Thus her al-blessinge auctor, blest her prime,
Thus hath shee gotten glory, from her ground,
Prioritie, from venerable time,
High sovereigntie, with empire hath her crownd,
All laws (their nurse and foundresse) fence her round,
Fayce *Edens* prayse, doth grace her grovnded fame,
Mans nature (then most pure) doth now the same.

Thus doth her high resemblance, rowle renoune,
Thus doth her fast coniunction, rayse regard.
Thus doth her sovereigne promise, prayse refowne
Thus was shee made, when all thinges else were mard.
Thus doth *Iehove* him selfe, her gretnesse gard, (ther,
Thus doth Gods church, (her child) commend their mo-
Thus common weales (her wainlings) will none other.

Thus *Nature*, aye ennobleth her estate.
Thus *Reason* doth vphold, her reputation,
Thus *Profit* doth her peerlesse estimate,
Thus *Neede* doth tend, her princely preservation.
Thus doth mans life maintaine her estimation.
Thus time doth yeeld, her charter true content,
Prescription custome practize and consent.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus doe all times, extend her excellency,
Thus doe all tongues, extoll her rule and raigne,
Thus doe all wittes, afford her best defence.
Thus doe all states, her sacred state maintaine,
Thus doe all sortes of men, attend her traine.

Thus nations all, nobilitate her name,
Thus doe all worldly powers, advance her fame.

Thus happie shee, when all doe pleade for one;
But haplesse you, when one deth speake for all:
You might haue spred your praises and bin gone,
And not chast mariage name, in question call,
But (lide franke gamisters) sith you venter all,

You that of others, speake the things you shoule not,
Must be content, to heere the wordes you would not.

If you had blotlesse made, your mistresse brow,
Before you spide the moate, in mariage eie;
You might her right, with better right avow,
Thus truth (thought tyred) never went awry.

*In vaine the master findes a lumping fault,
Where be himselfe doth stumble, and go hault.*

You clyent while shee claimes, a single gift,
Doth contradict, the law of propagation;
And with a poore pretence and seely shift,
Denies man comfort, (cause of her creation)
Eliies from old Evases faith, to newer fashion.

Depriues her seede, lifes blessing in the land,
Her selfe th' obedience, God doth first command.

The constaunce of Susanna.

Yea while fine nature, worketh in her kinde,
Deathes ruines to repaire, in lifes repriue;
(To liue for aie, in those shée leaues behinde)
Shee laboureth still, to leauue her like aliue,
And never die her selfe, whilst they surviuue.
You (while you crosse this kindly worke of nature)
Would liue your selues, but leauue none other creature.

And where the nations, to vphold their state,
Coherse with lawes, and shame, the single lite,
Your selues (as lawlesse) lawes doe antiquate,
Set barren seet against the bearing wife.
Thus wage you warre thus stirre you endiesse strife;
Thus swaying in selfe will, your will withstandeth,
What natures biddes, and God himselfe commandeth.

And thus your life, resembleth desolation,
Your bodies graues, to burie babes vnborne,
Your vow a cord, to strangle propagation,
(Far better ill-kept vowes, weare left vnsworne)
Your thoughts fierce foes, to leauue you kin forlorne.
Your willes flat worldlings, (while you temporize)
Your tongues in wedlockes wracke, doe scandalize.

God mariage made, in commanding moode,
And what he biddes, the same we must obey;
But inayden life, commended is for good;
Where is command, commanding beares small sway,
Therefore to stint this strife I boldly say,
If God give grace, the single life doth well,
If not such gift, then mariage doth excell.

The constancie of Susanna.

Be quiet then sweete thoughtes,lets rest agreeede;
Let mariage haue, deserved commendation:
Let virgins haue (that virgins are indeede)
Due praise, renowne, and sacred observation;
True maide, true vvife, in thought and conversation,

*Both holy in the Lord; the one as wife,
The other as a maide, in single life.*

Thus her soules sences, held a long dispute,
And sillogize their reasons pro & con;
While minde (the moderatour) standeth mute,
VVhat's vnresolved, to resolute vpon:
At length shee thus cōcludes, (when thoughts were gon)
*Sitb God made Eve, least man shoulde live alone,
Shee was of man, and not Pigmalions stōne.*

When *Fame* the light-foote (titling babe by birth)
False spie, that into secrets makes intrusion,
Tale-bearing paritour, to mone and mirth,
Foule-fleering blab, truthe traitour and confusion,
Had tane by top, the tale of her conclusion,
Shee spreds with speede, the motiue of her maryng,
Pretending hast, as if there were no taryng.

Whence came to passe, that troopes of corrivals,
Like eager houndes to get a gallant pray;
Doe poast with speede, not caring what befals,
To win the goale, and beare the price away,
They flaunt it our, in traine and rich array.
To get the favour, of this gracious faire,
That is so buxome, and so debonaire.

Somē

The constancie of Susanna.

Some offer stately dower, some princely gifts,
Some honors hight, and to advaunce her kin.
Some bare of these do sue with loue-sick shifte,
Pawne sighes sad looks, straung vowes, they make no sin,
To sweare for swear, this golden fleece to win.
Each streignes his thoughts, his rivall to beguile,
VVhilst in her iowre lurks death, life in her smile.

But as the mounting Eagle, in the windē,
Disdaines to stoope and checke base flockes of flies,
Or as club griping *Herules*, by kinde,
Doth single combate, with a dwarfe dispise,
VWhose force his manhood, doth not equalize,
So ihee doth scorne, to fawne on such a frend,
VWhose faith doth soone beegin, and sooner end.

Yet as in gardens, whear all herbes do grow,
Some fragrant are, whose sweetenesse doth excell,
Though some eie-pleasing lillies trimlie shew,
VWhen as they yeeld the sent, a loathsome sinell,
So some there weare, might please her eie full well.
And by sweete vertues odor, fume her sent,
VWith grace auromaticke, and redolent.

For as, while those bright globes of rare account,
And splendant plannets, in their spheeres do ronne,
One is superior, and doth all surmount,
VWithout compare, aye gloryous shininge sonne,
So in this gloabe of gallantes, theat stooide one,
VWhose neate bechavior, grace, and bounte bright,
Did dim the rest, as sonne the candle light.

An introduction to the story.

Renowned *Ioachim*, thou the man admired,
Both of the *Chaldees*, and the *Jewish nation*,
Thou weart of all regarded, and desired.

Greate was thie wealth, so was thie reputation;
Thy life an obiect, worthie contemplation.

That didst with *Titus*, purchaze thee a frend,
Each day beefore the sonne, his course did end.

Thou didst not with gnusse *Crasus*, hoord thy wealth.
Thou weart with *Cato* rich, when once contented.

Thou hateſt *Cesars*, pride, which wasthe pelfe,
That cauſd his death, which hee to late repented,
Thou hadſt *Iobs* waxen heart, which ſtill relented,

If orphaneſ cride, if widdowes wanted right,

If poore men ſaid, they wear opprefſ by might.

Thou weart a *Moses* in maintayning lawes.

Thou didſt fell *Pharaos*, government detest,

Thou with the *Machies*, in thy countries cause,

Wouldſt pawne that heart, that harbord in thy brefte,

Thou ever heldſt *Manasses* wayes, vnbleſt.

Thou weart a polititian, graue and wiſe,

Yet free from that flicke, to temporize.

What heart ſo iudurate, that Would not yeeld,

Whear vertues puissant valor, ſtroue to win?

What minde ſo obſtinate, to take the feild,

Gaingt thofe fine partes, whose matches ſcant have bin

Sure cauſe leſſe to reiect him, t' weare foule ſin.

Whearfor her thoughtes, well trayned in their good,

Do entartaine his ſuite, with gratiouſ mood,

For

The constancie of Susanna.

For as a *Diamond* rich, (through vertue rare)
To it the gads of stude steele doth draw:
And as the youth-worne *lass*, by like compare,
Bestowes his power attrative on the straw,
So sweete *Susanna*, not compeld by awe,
But led to love, by like heartes *Simpacie*,
Did yeeld his eares, his wished heartes replie.

VVho thought him selfe to bee the happiest wight,
VVhen shee became (not hers but) his desired,
VVhen shee had made surrender of her right,
The ioy, the comfort, whch his heart required,
VWhile to obtaine that pray hee more aspired,
Then conquer'g *Alexander*, to subdue,
A world far wider, then the world hee knew.

O peerelesse purchaze fownd by few or none.
O pleasant conquest, pleased conqueror,
VVhilst true content, triumpheth in loues throane,
More rightly rich, then *Asias* emperor,
The price was vertue, thou the vanquishor.
For in thy pris'ner, with a princely port,
Residinge vertues, held their royll court.

VWithin the closet, of whose cloyest pleasure,
(Neat cabbonet for vertues sweete repose)
Nature and *Grace*, had hid their finest treasure,
And left it all to *Constancies*, despouse.
(A trustie guardian, for such goodes as those)
Amongst which glorious graces, in her brest,
Bright Chastesse was seen, aboue the rest.

The constancie of Susanna.

Shee seated in a seate which vertue placeth,
A roiall throne (the soule and minde divine)
As onely grace, that every vertue graceth,
Is canopied with Fayre (most pure and fine)
Like milkie-way, with circling Cristalline.

And at her knees, aie kneele, (and parte not thence)
Transparent puritie, and (Gods gifte) *Continenſe*.

And to vphold her high, and heav'ly state,
Shee hath for guard, attending on her traime,
Sobrietie (truthe friend, and vices hate)
Foresight (that evill occasions doth refraine)
Dunbe tongue, dead heart, blinde eie, deafe eare, sad braine.
Well guided thoughts; a hand and foote not idle;
Sterne abstinence, that head-strong lust doth bridle.

O chauſtie (thou beautie of the minde)
Vnspotted puritie in things vnpure,
The comliest ornament of woman kinde;
Were not this seate most slipprie and vnsure,
Thou wouldest in all and not in few indure.
But thy light foes, false title, of true pleasure,
Thee loathed makes, her loved out of measure.

Yea ſince thy friends in shew, but foes indeede,
Vaine Tutors taught, their pupils how to spell,
For caste, cance; and to ſerue fowle neede,
If chauſtly want, that cloaſly doth doe well;
This motiue made, ſome ſubiects to rebell,
Who by preſence, to vnderprop thy crowne,
In ſecret make auaultes, to pull thee downe.

Whole

The confancie of Susanna,

VWhose proud *Essenian* high-priest, *Rabbena*,
To canonize thy saint, wil kisse thy shrine.
Yet not with *Aaron* choose chaste *El'saba*,
But like that *Levite* vse his concubine,
Yea if thou dost thy selfe, in mariage ioine,
They blesse thy name, as sacred one of seven,
Yet ban thine act, as most vnworthy heaven.

Oneighing lades, fast friendes to infamie,
Nurses to naughtinesse, lewd bawdes to lust,
Base vassalles, to your willes *Apostacie*,
Why doth not *Conscience*, checke your deedes vniust?
VVhy doth not sad *Dispaire*, drowne in distrust,
Those temptors of these sacred *Nymphes* to sin?
VWhom rape may not enforce, nor flattery win.

Delightsome flowers, doe quickly fall and fade,
And budding beauty blasteth, in small space;
But constant *Chast*, thy sonne goes not to glade,
No age nor eating time, can thee deface,
VVhile vertue thee, thou vertue, dost imbrace.
Thou grakest *Susan*, having thee in hold,
As richest lemnes, doe grace the finest gold.

Her *Ambe* tressles, made a seemely shew;
Her milke-white skin, adorned natures skill,
Yet all did vanish, as the liquid devv,
VVhile *Chastitie* remaines eternall still,
VVhy then are vvomen vvedded to vaine vwill?
That for a wanton momentanie pleasure,
They(wilful) vvaſt an everlasting treſure.

The constancie of Susanna.

Had *Susanna* bin, of their vnstable minde,
To sel eternitie to get a toy;
Shee had not left such noted fame behinde.
But had bin titled, faith-lesse, fondly coy,
VVhich did relinquish lust, for lasting ioye.
And left her loved name, to be eternall;
But those that wrong'd the same, like fendes infernal.

For when her choice, did yeeld a vvorldes delight,
And ioies did soare, aboue the reach of sorrow;
VVhen settled thoughtes, secure of worldly spight,
And barge of blisse, high fortunes seas did forrow,
Then flattring night, brought foorth a doleful morrow.
What time her gracious God, did hold it best,
To blaze abroade, what harbord in her brest.

For as he faithful *Abrahams* heart, did proue,
By willing offring, of his guiltlesse sonne;
And tried *Iobs* stable faith, and constant loue,
What time slie *Sarhan*, his consent had wonne,
To leave *Iobs* health forlorne, and wealth vndone:
Even so he sifted, *Susans* constancie,
If that shee would, her pure faith falsifie.

And to complot this treason, by temptation,
False *Sarhan* had fit men, fit time, fit place;
VVas never foe so fitted for invasion,
The plot once laid he would not bate an ace,
The price was shame (her glories dim disgrace)
The meanes, the men, the time, the place, thus fitted;
Yet *Sarhan* prov'd a foole, and shallow witted.

VVhile

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhile flattering time,could not her thoughts contene,
Convenient place,had no convenient prae,
Though nobles sought her farnes disparagement,
Yet had more noble heart,a constant naie,
A judges wordes,gainst iustice beare no sway.

Gray haires,(grim sutors) argued yowthes greene follie,
Their velle of Priest-hooде made them more,vnhollic.

Such were the wightes,that would this Ladie wrong,
So were their hearts,addicted to vile actions,
That their lust-fostred thoughtes,did wholie long,
On harmelesse *Chasttie*, to raise exactions.

VWhy should stout nobles stoope to base detractions?

VWhy should such ympious ympes,haue rule of all,
Whose thoughtes are baile, and bond-slaves vnto thrall.

VVoe to that place,where law is turn'd to lust,
VVoe,to that land,where rulers fall to sin.

VVoe to that state,where might doth say I must.

VVoe to the wrong'd,that seeketh right of him,

VWho forceth not of good,or right a pin:

But makes the earth,the obiect of his eies,

Because he would,both God and heav'n despise.

Thou God which dost,fell tyrans rage detest,

VWhy suffrest thou such wolues , to tyrannise?

VWhy are thy feely lamkins so opprest?

And doth not mercie in thy brest arise?

Sure thou art merciful,in this thy guise.

In giving Tyrantestime,for to repent,

And fruicfull patience,to the innocent,

The constancie of Susanna.

A rare example, of which righteous loue,
Doth in this ladies life, at large appeares;
VVhom tyrant stride, vwhether shee vvould remoue,
Her heart from thee, (her loving Lord most deere)
But shee in thee, remaind the vanquerisher;
VVhen thou didst raise, young *Daniell* in her right,
And put her shamelesse foes, to shameful flight.

For when the nuptiall rightes, had due dispatch,
And solemne lawes, fast knit the sociall band,
By writing made, attentice of the mach.
VVhen first *Helebia*, gaue his daughters hand,
Before the states, and seniors of the land;
That yeare aduanced were, to iudgement leate,
Those hell-taught hirelings, fit for *Sasbans* feate,

For while this tender lady, taught her will,
To attend her liked loue, and Lordly mate,
The captiue *Iewes*, in troopes resorted still,
To iet in *Isachars* courtes, and there debate,
Of meanes, to mannage their forlorne estate;
To rouse religion, and awake their law,
Borne downe by bondage, breeder of their awe,

So to ere st a secret *Sanhedrin*,
They singled foorth two seniors, from the best,
Graue, Aged, learned, wise, of noble kin,
For to expound the law, and rule the rest,
But they vwhich seem'd in shew what they profest,
In prooфе were *Bethals* broode; base slippes of *Caine*,
In faith false *Apostates*, men vile, and yaine,

These

The constancie of Susanna.

These long frequented, noble *Ioachims* place,
Grim sires severe, like *Aristarchus* brow,
Seem'd nothing popular; could not the grace,
To kisse the hand, or stoope the stately bow,
But (though with halting) onely well knew how,
To render right, without regard of game,
Which made contending troopes, attend their traine.

But modest ladie, (Ladie modestie)
Shee to avoide the presse, in this repaire,
And shun the gaze, of every glauncing eie,
VVould to her garden walke to take the aire:
A fine contrived plot and passing faire;
Hem'd in with stately walles vvhich lik'd her vwell,
(Chaste cloistred nymph, within to sweete a cell.)

And when the presse vvas past, and coast vvas cleere,
Vnto her houne, her setled pase shee bendes:
VVhere oft shee findes her Lord, and loving Pheere,
Conferring vwith those seniors, his good friendes.
To whom (for *Ioachims* loue) good looke shee lendes.
Secure of lust; shee deemd their age more stable,
Their faith more holy, thoughts more honorable.

But in plaine-meaning trust, false treason lurkes.
Slic *Sathan* hence, gate breath to blow lustes fire.
At which their melting heartes, he softly workes,
So that they take, th'impression of desire,
And so did bend, to vwhat he vwould require.
Thus with faire stale, he baiteth buzzardes eies,
To teach these dotardes trickes, to wantonize.

The constancie of Susanna;

The silver heares/sterne sum' nors to the graue)

Are dipt in die-pot, and vwell taught to fal,

In curled tuftes, like yonkers neate and braue.

(No Peruge yet had Peru scene at al)

While withered limmes would youthes delights recal;

The spundge, the combe, the glasse, doe wait at hand,

To cleere the wrinckled skin, that age had tand.

Th' Arabian odors, mend a noisome fault:

Each word, each looke, each gesture smakes of art,

The limping legge begins to leape and vault.

VVhen Cupid shoothes, where death should thrill his dart,

Old wagges exceede to play the wantons part.

And then though folly, give themselves the fal,

Yet must sweete beauty beare the blame of al.

So things wel ment, are oftentimes mistaken,

Sometimes the harmelesse eie, doth seeke offence,

Sometimes faire dutie, makes his friend forsaken,

Sometimes foulfeaultes, are hid by faire pretence.

So were these seniors, snared by true fense.

VVhen (burnd not by the fire, but by the light)

They were entrap'd, by that true spie, the light.

VVhile chast, concentricke circles of her eies,

Like sphericke sections, cut by curious art,

Refle& the wanton beames, which against them flies,

Backe to the darkesoine dungeon, of the heart,

Makes Liver loue-sicke, poysons every part.

Makes reason, and heartes passions, disagree;

Makes that which was not, what it should not be.

The constancie of Susanna.

Fie on fine beautie, that dost bane thy breeder,
Fie on false honor, that betrayst thy friend,
Fie on thee foolish feature, thou eie feeder.
Fie on vnstedfast riches, friendes vnkinde.
Fie on choice education (art thou blinde?)
Fie on fit time, alluring bawd to evil,
Fie on fit place, a broker for the devill.

These were the traitours, that entisementes gaue,
To blinde concupiscence, and bedlem lust,
To hood-winke vertue, and at reason rauie,
That bids be bold, and banish faint distrust.
Pretendes the purchase good, and title iust.
Perswades it cowardise, to daunt for shame,
VVhere greater conquest winnes the greater fame.

And yet they deem'd her vertues, farre to great,
Her thoughtes to high, to stoope to base desire,
Which did not coole, but much augment the heate.
Great logges laid on, doe most encrease the fire,
Beate downe by doubtes, stout lust doth clim the higher.
When strugling streames, with strongest baies are bent,
Then flowdes doe swell, and rage most insolent.

And so while raging lust, out-reacheth reason,
(Like bended waues they surge aboue the bankes)
Displease their friendes, and selues, and al to please one,
Leave law, and right, to play vnlawful prankes;
Vow great attemptes, not worthy smallest thankes,
Grow carelessse, resolute in dissolution;
Bewitch'd with beauties blaze, to worke abusion.

Thus

The confancie of Susanna.

That those, which vvhilome did like *Martiall* vvightes,
VVeild *Mars* his weapons, and were manly men;
Become nice *Sybarites*, faint hearted knights,
Forsake the field, to dwue in (*Cupid's* den),
Resigne the Eagles empire, to the wren.

Obscure *Herculan* fortitude, and fame,
By childish service, of some *Lydian* dame.

For as the fish that (of his force to stoppe)
Hight *Remora*, (much like the seele snaille)
Can stay the ship, of loftie tallest toppe,
Gainst force of oares, and furious winded saile;
So some whose fame, high fortune could not faile.
Amidst their happiest course, fare forst to staine,
By lust-fed loue, or else as weake delay.

So sovereignes oft, come stubiectes to their sin,
Whilst those that should not, soonst are slaues to lust,
Men what they must not, most are prone to win,
Which makes trimme vertue, dragled in the dust.
When rulers are (as yron worne vwith rust)
Consum'd with loue, then countries fall to sinne,
As heere you see these iudges doe beginne.

VVho oft were bent (by reasons *Ecstasis*)
VWith club-fist violence, and clownish force,
To breake into that princelie *Pyramis*,
And batter downe, her wel-built walles perforce,
If milde entreatie, might not moue remorse.
Or bold persuasions, blinde the eies of reason,
Or subtile teates, surprise the fort by treason.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus oft they ment, to make a rash assault;
More oft they seeke, vile opportunitie,
And most doe muse, how they maie cloake the fault,
If mad desire, accomplished might be,
Their withered hoping hearts thinke long to see.
The fruit of their vntimelie, sprowting lust;
Th' event whereof, they held in deepe distrust.

Each daie these graybeardes, kisse the garden dore,
To see at least the shadow of their Saint,
And through the slender crannies, prie and pore,
To feede the humor that doth make them faint,
So doth her peerelesse hue their eies attaint.
That aie to gaze on her, they doe require;
As on sweete speckled *Panibers* beastes desire.

Each daie for fervent loue, of this faire goddesse,
They gad on pilgrimage, to her sweete shrine.
Each daie fowle lust, did feede in fainting bodies,
On fresh recording, of her beauties shine,
Each day they be replete, and yet doe pine.
While outward obiect nursing inward anguish,
Abates the looke and makes the life to languish.

Thus doth delay, not lessen but increase,
The furious fittes, of their rebellions soare.
And though they would, a parlee for their peace,
Yet want they meanes, her favour to implore,
VVhich makes them wish, to be within the dore,
VVith her alone, that they might worke their vwill,
To pray or force her, to that cursed ill,

[They

The constancie of Susanna.

They wondred greatly, at each others griefe,
Yet want the skil, the secret cause to know,
Though friendly hand, be prest to yeeld reliefe,
Yet fngred pulse, cannot bewray their woe,
And shaine doth blush, such shamefull partes to shew.

While neither knowes, that either is entangled,
With that sharpe hooke, wherewith himselfe is angled,

Til time, that pend, the prologue in this play,
And did pretend, some pleasing comedy:
By stately rustling actors, did bewray,
Shee ment to staine the stage, and standers by,
VVith tragique bloud, in fel *Catastrophe*.

And sending opportunitie with speede,
To fit occasion, bids them both proceede.

For on a day, vwhen *Cymbiu*s lampe of light,
Had with his golden beames, embost the skie,
And (climbing from the circle-bounding sight)
Neere to the noone-steed line, vvas mounted hie,
VVhen *Nature* did on customes lote reliе.

To vnder-propst her weakenesse, with repast,
That now grew faint, and feeble with long fast.

Then at kind *Ioschims* gates, these seniors part,
(Vntrustie traitours, to so true a friend)
And to their several houses, doe revert.
But leaue in pawne, vnbodied hearts behinde:
(Not where it liues but loues remaines the minde)
They doe repose, their friend-shippe on their foe?
They leaue sweete life in gage, yet home they goe.

V Vhere

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhere lazie rest, did ransacke all their vaines,
Choice of delights, doe breed no choice of ease,
The wayward worme, vwithin their adled braines,
Was nibbling still, nothing but one could please,
The feathered seate, doth seeme a nest of fleas.

The princely banquets, held a homely diet,
The Doriane musicke, makes the minde vnquiet.

The cookes controld, the meate not seasoned well,
The courtly waitor, seemes a cartly clowne,
The fragrant odors, yeeld a loathsome smell.
Who looketh sad, he thinkes on him doth frowne,
Who laughes out-right, doth envie his renowne.

Who wispreth in the care doth him reprove,
Who praiseth beauty, robbes him of his loue.

His loue? not shee graue ladie, first his loue,
Whose breasts did breed, yowthes sweet contēmpts wel,
Hiseies as blinde in choice, he doth reprove,
For *Ioachims* choice, all choices doth excell,
His neigbours sheepe (not his) must beare the bell.
Sweete *Susan* (none but shee) is worthy honor,
His *Debora* not worthy to waite on her,

Fond, testy, wayward, waspish, out of tune,
His giddy head, doth tossle his trencher round,
His hastic heart is fierce, doth fret, and sume,
His knife doth feele, his passions to abound,
His restlesse foote, doth grate the harmelesse ground.
Each punct of time, doth seeme a lingring morrow,
The mcale is short, when as the lawce is sorrow.

Therefore

The constancie of Susanna.

Therefore to seeke mote ease,in pleasing place,
They post alone,vnto the garden dore.
VVhere one of them not staide,a breathing space,
But that his corry vall, is come to shore,
VVhere never boath,(till then) did meeete before.
And then to soone;for false occasion [then],
Did plot the fall,of these vnfaythfull men.

For train'd by time,each one acquaintes the other,
How beauties blaze,in *Susans* modestie,
Had set drie lust on fire,vvwhich did not smother,
(VVithin their withered breastes)but burning flie,
Like fierie dragon,in the flaming skie.

Which forst them to forget,their God their king,
And binde best hope,vnto a hopeless thing.

They puse a space,what best to doe resolving,
Like two fierce Beares,of greedie appetite.
Devising meanes, and in their mindes revolving,
If that shee will not wrong,her *Joachims* right,
They would enforce her then,by force and might.

Yet heere a guiltie conscience,laies a barre,
To stop this course, and their devises marre.

Saith one of them shall we commit this evill?
Shall freemen borne,be bond-slaves vnto sinnes?
Shall we embrace the flesh,to kisse the Divell?
Shall we controlling vice,to vice beginne?
Shall we so famous,thus defame our kinne?
(My Lord)we must supprese,these proud assaults,
Else shall we great ones,make the greater faultes.

The

The constancie of Sufanne.

The rule by vwhich all other rules, are tried,
Must beare a true proportion, every way.
And vuant the smalleſt faultes, that maie be ſpied,
So kings and ſeniors, that doe beare the ſway,
Must liue to rule, and yet the lawes obey.
Else how ſhould they blacke ſin, rebuke and blame,
VVhen they themſelues are guilty in the ſame?

A mole is ſpeedlie ſpied, in the face,
VVhen in the bodie blaines, are vnceavead.
One ſeely miſle will yeeld vs, more diſgrace,
Then though the vnder lying, and poore aggrieved,
VVere of al roiall vertues, quite bereaved.
For rulers are, the looking-glaſſe, the booke,
In which all ſubiects cies, doe reade and looke.

O let vs then remember, theres a God,
A God, whose ſearching eie, hath deepest ſeeing,
A God, whose proviſence, doth never plod,
A God, in whom we moue, and haue our being,
A God, to whom each finne, is diſagreeing.
A God, that will not winke, at this miſdeede,
A God, that will iſtinct revendge, vwith ſpeeđe.

But heere I ſee, a cursed fawning pleasure,
That freez'th my ſoule, yet burn'ſh my heart with luſt.
That doth torment my minde, beyonde all meaſure,
And over-rules (me ruler) with I muſt.
Then tel me brother whereto both ſhall truſt.
For my poore trembling heart, is ſo tormented,
That I the aet(vnaſted) haue repented.

The constancie of Susanna.

His sad colleague, vvhho all this time gaue eare,
VVith good attencion, to this wavering tale,
Did seeme as though, he held his counsaile deere;
But in his brest, they bred most deadly bale,
So sorrow suckt his bloud, that he lookt pale.

And staggering paus'd, what answe were best to make him,
Or take advice, what course he should betake him.

At length from sin-flowing soule, (as flame from fire)
He belloweth out, hoat-breathed brutish wordes:
I must vvhith speed, effect my hearts desire,
Commanding lust, no longer pawse affords,
No, though mine obiect, were ten thousand swords.

Ne can my spirit represso, so fierce a foe,
My vvil is bent, my heart vvil haue it so.

A good physition, may his patient cure,
If he be carefull, of the vvound in seafons:
But carelesse, if he let it long indure,
He findes at length, not one sufficient reason,
How of a festred ulcer, he might ease one.

So if in time, I had this plague prevented,
I should haue had no time, to haue repented.

But now my wound, out-reacheth reasons skill,
It festreth inward, and so hurts my heart,
That I most bend, to my rebellious will.

(Vnlesse I wil endure, an endlesse smart)
I vvould some Pythomisse could vvorke by art.
Or man of God by praier obtaine the skil,
To turne my heart, from this intended il.

The constancie of Susanna.

But twil not be; I cannot haue redresse,
Dispaire doth stop the way, to former state.
I must therefore to her, my grieves expresse,
And worke by griping might, and forced hate,
If that shee vwill not be, compassionate.

Thus I resolute, my thoughts are past relenting,
And carelesse I (my Lord) of your consenting.

Yet while sinnes griefe, would heale his soules consiption
Foorth steps the temptour, and to stop restraint,
Doth beare him vp with winges, of proud presumption,
Biddes hope be stable, and his faith not faint;
Thy God (saith he) with mercy heeres complaint.
If thou to him, thy acted sinnes deplore,
He heales with speede, and salues thy smarting soare.

And what? thy slippe is but a veniall sinne,
Fine natures fault, (or else no fault at all)
The saved Saints themselues, haue sinners binne,
The steddiest foote, sometimes doth take a fall,
No shame to trip, but being downe to crawl.
VVhat if graue age, of wantonnesse reprove thee?
The blame be hers, whose matchles parts did moue thee,

Thus subtile *Sathan*, faines (to shift a carde)
That vice is vertue, and foule-sinne salvation:
And that condigne, our works are of revward,
VVhen as our deeds, are vworthy condemnation,
To build presumptuous sinnes, on Gods compassion,
He brings sinnes warnings, warrants vnto sinne,
VVhile thus to pray, his pupill doth beginne.

The constancie of Susanna.

O God(saith he) doe not behold this sin,
But if thou doſt, yet doe thou not reie& vs,
For moe thy servantes haue offendors bin,
Therefore(O Lord)doe not to shame detect vs,
Nor with thy heavy-falling hand, correct vs.
Sith we are not the first, that haue transgrefſed,
Thy sacred preceptes, in thy lavy exprefſed.

Old Adam fell, and yet thou didſt relieuē him,
Thou haſt forgotten, Nobahs drunkenneſſe :
Lothes ſin was greater, yet thou didſt forgiue him:
Thy hearts-loue David, Vrie did opprefſe,
And made his wife, his luſtes adultereffe.
High-seated Salomon,(that held hiſ throne)
Fel to fond luſt, and had more faultes then one.

All these(and moe thy servants) left thy lawes,
Yet did thy mercies largeſſe pardon all:
VVhy ſhould I then, haue longer time to pawſe?
Or dread the ſtorme, ere it begin to fal?
No,no,poore heart,I will no thoughtes forſtall.
Invent the way, to win thy choice delight,
And thiſ my hand, ſhal helpe vvith maine and might.

He making might, the period of his ſpeach,
Entreates his mate,to censure his conclusion,
Protesting that no reaſon, ſhould out-reach,
Or interrupt,his ſetled resolution,
VVhile thus he reſteth careleſſe of conuſion,
His partner doth impart,his thoughtes replie,
And leades amisse,vvhat went before awry.

The constancie of Susanna.

Senior (saith he) rash is this enterprise,
Hast-making marchantes often marre good marte,
Lettes pawle a space, our hast may prodigize,
Let first a fawning eie, to her impart,
The loue-sicke passions, of a friendly heart.

Let sighes entreate, let lookes our loue vnfold,
Lets tempt her truth, with traitorous gobs of gold.

Lets hire some B. to boord her with perswations,
That letter hath more cunning, then the Ka.

Lets court her oft, with stately falutations,

Lets sift the secrets, of our *Cabala*.

Lets looke in *Bresith* booke, and *Marcana*.

What hearb, what stone, what word, hath power in loue,

Lets try their force, and every vertue proue.

VV e read in bookes of pendants, and of potions,
Of figures fain'd, with quaint characterismes,
Of Mawmets made by art, to plannets motions,
Of direfull wordes, and powerfull exorcismes,
Of curious feates, to raise loues paroxismes.

If heaven will not heere, lets sue to hell,

The Fayres haue great force, old wiues can tell.

Lets then hunt out, some old *Hecatean* hagge,
That can eclipse the moone, and clowde the sonne:
Sweepe hilles away, and cause the grownd to wagge:

Make headlong streames, backe to their heads to run,
Raife spirites (as *Saul* in *Endor* saw was done)

Worke mindes as wax, make wayward will, loues thrall,

Lets trie their skill, before we venture all.

The constancie of Susanna.

But out fond llingring leaches, to sicke loue,
VVhile you provide, your patient doth decay:
Let leasures guests, your paltry physicke proue,
Our sickenesse is impatient of delay,
Therefore (sweet Senior) let vs hast away,

Into this happiest orchard, there to hide vs,
To try what better fortune doth abide vs.

VVhich said: these dotards sneake in at the gate,
(False traitor to take in his ladies foes)
And (being in) sly foxes they debate,
VVhere best to finde fit couch, for to repose,
And shrowd them selues, from gazing eies disclose.
Till trustlesse time might pay the hoped hire,
Their hunger-starved lust, did so desire.

And standing thus at gaze, at length they spie,
A spreading palme, (fit arbour for to feast in)
VVhose wreathe d boughes, and branches clowd the sky.
This louely bower, these brothels choose to rest in.
(To neat a perch, for such night owles to nest in.)

VVhere flowring Camomill, did cloath the ground,
VVith Rose and Eglantine, encloased round.

VVhile heere they lurke, with pleasing shrubs inshrinde,
Faire sights, fresh aire, doth yeeld them little easse.
VVhile conscience sting doth gaule, the guilty minde,
Their swelling thoughtes, doe striue like struggling seas,
No obiect of the eie, or eare, doth p'lease.

They dread the leaues, with wavering wil bewray the
Or twyning birdes, with taunting tunes betray them.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The whistling winde, amongst the trembling trees,
Doth force the head to aisle, and heart to ake,
The harmelesse humming, of the toyling Bees,
Doth cause the legges to quiver, hands to quake.
Least Ioaachim them suspect, and tardy take,
VVherefore the fearefull eie, doth loath the light,
And long to haue, sin-shrowding darkeosome night.

And while they both revolute their case; (saith one)
I had a dreame, (God turne my dreame to good)
Mee seem'd we sitting, on the iudgement throne,
Our seate fell downe, into a stremme of blood;
And both we drenched in the crymson flood.
In sleepe I strooke, and strugled (wanting breath)
To scape those waues, that did confiire our death.

VVhich terror made my fearful flesh so tremble,
Vnneathes I could, my perfect sences finde.
Cease (quoth his mate) no more, dreames oft dissemble.
Dreames are deceites, as wavering as the winde,
They never daunt, a full resolved minde.
A fainting heart, shall never loose the pray,
VVhich (mawgre dreames) I meane to win this day.

Thus are those seniors, sold to desolation,
VVho doth not see their soules subdue to sin?
VVhilst their lust-hardned hearts, by no perswasion,
Can be recald, from what they did begin.
But bent to venture all, vnsure to win.
Like ravening beares, bereaved of their whelpes,
They sit alone, devising many helpes,

The constancie of Susanna.

Devising manie helpeſ, to worke their will,

To vreſt or winne her, to their loathed lureſ:

O that ſuch Tygers fierce, her ſeeke to ſpill.

O that ſuch drowsie droaneſ, ſhould be ſecure,

To creepe into a hiue, vNSTAIN'd and pure.

To taſt that *Nectar*, and *Hyblean Honie*,

That none but one could winne, for loue or monie.

O hearts much harder, then the *Adamant*,

O chartes of ſinne, mappes of impietie.

Are you the men, that vices ſhould ſuppant?

Doe you (in ſhew) adore the dietie?

And ſeeke in ſcret, finnes varietieſ.

O doe but thinke, there comes a iudgement daies,

Where ſuch miſdeedes, cannot be wiſt'd awaie.

But your hearts, harbour nougħt, but raviſhment,

You followv *Terens* vaine, in villanie.

You careleſſe how to die, or to repent,

Do liue ſecure of shame, and infamie,

And thinke on nougħt, but oportunity.

To perpetrate, your vvicked levv'd intent,

In which already, many daies are ſpent.

But all daies now, are paſſed and expired,

In vvwhich you liv'd twixt hope, and grimme dispaire.

VVhen time hath brought you, vvhile you moſt deſer

Even to that orchard, where moſt hollome aire,

Doth kiffe the creature, which you held moſt faire.

Iniuious time, vvhy diſt thou ſerue her ſo,

VVhich never vvas or meant to be thy ſoe?

VVhy

The confancie of Susanna.

VVhy didst thou seeke, & enthral a sacred soule?
VVhy didst thou seek to traine her vnto lust?
VVhy dost not oportunitie controule?
VVwhich seekes to draine her honour in the dust?
O flattning oportunitie vniust,
Fit flauie to fallie *Sathans* lewd desigement,
VVhen thy compeere, fit place, yeeldes entertainment.

O God vvhys haft thou set, the ravening wolfe,
Vpon the poore, and harmelesse lamb to pray?
VVhy didst thou let her scape, (*baribdis* gulfe,
For to (by *Scylla* rocke) be cast away?
Thou haft vpheld her, happie to this daie,
And now must light, in Lyons ravening iawes,
And plead to eares, that know no right nor lawes.

For when the sunne (neere sommer tropicke seated)
VVith bright reflected beames, did all repeate:
And westward from the southerne line, retreated,
Did make the foggie heart, in shade to sweate,
And croaking raven, gape and pant for heate.
Then did *Susanna*, to her vvalke repaire,
In shadowed seate, to take fresh cooling aire.

VVhere with her mates demure, (two modest maides)
Shee shrowds her selfe in shrubs, neere pleasant spring:
(Like harmelesse *Elves* the fountaine fairy *Nymphs*)
VVhere waters rush, and chirping birdes doe sing,
And art with nature, framd a curious thing.
A stately conduit, whence sweete streames distilled,
VVwhich underneath, a sumptuous cestern filled.

An introduction to the story.

In which this vertuous dame, was wont to bath her,
VVhen lawful rightes, such homage did require.
And now (to soone) induced much the rather,
Because sun-burning beames, did fry like fire,
VVherefore (shee saith) good wentches home retire.
And bring the soape, the cloathes and things I neede,
Shut fast the dores, returne againe with spedde,

VVith due obeylance, and a bashfull smile,
They yeeld the looke, of readie servitude,
And with officious foote, they post awhile,
Vnto the garden dores, and them occlude,
To stop each stranger out, that wight intrude.
And by a posterne gate, they post away,
And yet quicke wantons, make to tedious stay.

Thus left alone (good lady voide of feare)
Shee serues her God, with solitarie muse,
Secure what birdes of rapine, roosted there,
That ment her wretch, in their sharpe clawes to bruse,
And vnprophaned bodie, to abuse.
O little doth shee know, what serpentes lurke,
In traitrous place, to pray on natures worke.

Had shee *Diana* bin (as poete faine)
VVhen these *Affons*, pried through the vwood;
Shee as *Diana* did, would them constraine,
To be transformed, in her angry moode.
Shee could not doe her glory, greaser good,
But what *Affons* seeke, to serue their vwill,
Shee little knowes, that never knew such ill.

The constancie of Susanna.

The seely fish, that hooke hath never angled,
Doth seldome feare, what's hidden in the baite.
The bird that never was, with snare entangled,
Doth shun no place, for that thee feares deceite,
So careless shee, what cures lie at receite.

To take, entangle, wronge, her guiltlesse minde;
Doth nothing feare, shee should such treason finde.

But *Sathan* (that had smothered long his fire)
Brings now three blazes flaming, hies apase,
To kindle bright, the brand of their desire,
With beauties prae, commodious time, and place,
Up (saith he) beastes: faint sluggards: are you bale?

Cheere vp your sp'rits, let groaning thoughts be glad,
So faire a day, no Lordings ever had.

VVhile faultlesse shee, sits trapt by false occasion,
VVhen once her maides were gone, and all things fast;
Forthwith these lust-breath'd Lordes, made rash invasion,
To make prophane, the soule that is so chaste,
Like hunger-starved, vultures they make hast.

To get the baite, within their ravenous beakes,
To kisse those corall lips, and roseall cheakes.

And though with hast, they fall vpon the ground;
They rise againe, and headlong foorth doe ronne.
The fall doth say, this fact shall you confound.
Your seate is dipt in blood, and you vndone,
O leue it of, that is so ill begonne.

But while rebellious *Sathan*, runneth by them,
Good motions cannot enter, or come nigh them.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhen shee (good lady) savv these stragling Lordes,
To presse in presence, with such heedleſſe speede;
Shee wondred greatly: Ignorant vvhath wordes,
(VVhen as they came) would from their hearts proceede,
They streight vwith circled armes, her bondage breede.

VWhile gazing eies, beholde her comely hue,
And maffling mouthes, these graceleſſe speeches spue.

Quoth one of them (for one did speake for boath)
Wee must, with that false heart began to faile him.
To tell the rest his guilty minde was loath,
Thinking (perhaps) dumbe shewes would moft availe him,
And shee amaz'd, with merveile what should aile him.

To greete her (helpeleſſe captiue) with *I must*,
Did feare the fury, of the tyrant lust.

And quivering standes, as doth the harmeleſſe deere,
Beset with greedie cures, and eare houndes:
Shee looks about, and pries to finde a cleere,
To scape these *Crocodiles*, that passe their bounds,
VVhose clasped armes, doe yeeld her deadly wounds.
While shame doth tie their tongues, & make them mute,
And conscience seekes, their conquest to confute.

At warre was vvit and will, for best endevours,
Contending thoughtes, did hold a civill schisme,
As freezing fittes, preceede hoate burning fevors,
So conscience feeles, a shaking *paroxysme*,
In vaine doth reason, fight with *Rhetorisme*.

The weaking wit, constrained is to yeeld,
And bedlem lust, left owner of the field.

An introduction to the story.

For when hee had a tyme,him selfe bethought,

Right,shame, and feare,exiled from his heart,
And love with lust,a cruell combate fought,

And strived one,the other to converte,

Then hee began, his passions to imparte.

Yet bent to speake, and doughtfull of her nay,

Hoo faintes againe and knowes not what to say.

Then(as those cheating mates in conny-catchinge,

Cogge,prate, and lie,to furnish foorth their feate)

He beates and settes,his braines a brood in hatching,

Straung sleightes,to gaine this more then golden cheate,

And *Ephemeris*,to coole flesh.burning heat.

At length twixt faltring hope, and faint despaire,

He fawnes,he frownes,he threates,he speakes her faire.

Sweete ladie now(saith he)we must enjoy thee.

If no or liues,will soone vnbodyed be,

Consent therefore, if no, vve will destroy thee,

And say we saw one heere,embracinge thee,

Nay wee will vow by heaven ,wee did thee see,

To act adulterouse sinne,with some base slauue,

Then yeeld if thou wilt lief and honor have.

If thou demaund,how our sin-seas'ned hearts,

VVith out remorse can harbor this knyfdeed,

Then know that love, and dutie playd their partes

VVithin our brests,some better thoughts to breed,

But lust did blot,what reason still decreed.

Thy looke(fair ladie)worthie to,be loved,

So bownd our hearts,they might not be removed

Thy

The constancie of Susanna.

Thy stature like, the stately Cedar trees
Thy peerlesse beautie, passing al the rest,
Thy seemely iestures, which each noats and sees,
These are the thinges, enthrall the mightiest.
And make commaunding monarcches, to be prest,
To fall from honor, justice, law, and right.
And bannish those, which love them, out of sight.

These are the traytors, which betray thee now,
These (like false guides) do lead vs from the Lord,
These thinges make lawfull kinges, and Lordes allow,
Thinges most vnlawfull, and to bee abhord.
What man (faire ladie) could not well afford,
To try fell paines, to purchaze such a loue,
Yea pains of death, and thousand perils prove,

Didst ever read, those high conceyted storyes,
In which the lives', of worthy loves are writ?
If so, thou seeſt, the trophies of their glories,
Weare rayſd on loue and how inspir'd with it,
They pawne their lives, by fartheſt reach of wit,
To make loves name, eternall and admired.
That else to faime, had not with cost bin hired.

O then but thinke, thy Lords are more tormented,
Who dare ſucept, more perilles then them all.
And yet we know, our deedes may be repented.
Sith greater men, do take the greatest fall.
For when they ſlip, the Echo is not ſmal,
That doth reflect their faultes, to every eare,
VWhich makes contented mindes, not climb for feare.
Had

The confarsie of Susanne.

Had not (the Charmer) beautie vs bee witched,
VVe should have held, the freedom of our state,
And have bin richly, with Gods giftes enriched.
And never feard the spite, of daring fate.
But why do we, our fortunes now relate,
VVhich may (perhaps) our rash attemptes ensue?
VVe came not now, our future state to rue.

But came our over burning hearts, to cole,
Enflamed by reflection, of thine eies,
Let them (sweet love) be quenched in that poole,
That may thy *Iacobins* vse, and ours suffice.
But say the word, and we will meanes devise,
That thou fair dame, shalt never be suspected.
For why, our deed, to none shall be detected,

What if thy parentes be, right deere vnto thee?
Thy children deere, good *Iacobins* deerst of all?
Yet flie faint feare, this fact shall not vndo thee,
Beat down distrust, and all his thoughts appall.
For this misdeed, shall not in question call,
Thy spotlesse fame, which all men hold vnfractred,
And deeds unknownne, are ev'n as thonghes unacted.

Qnoth he we both, are linially descended,
From *Iuda* race kinsmen to *Zedechias*.
Thou maist sweet fair, in vs be princely frended,
Yea more, if thou wilt bend vnto our byas,
Thou maist be mother, to the great *Messias*,
And so be famosed, by royll birth,
Of absolute commaunder, of the earth.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus fleshly speaks, this carnall Cabalist,
Pawninge his soules deere life, to ransom lust.
Or like a kingdome dreaming, Thalmudist.
That in an earthy empyre, puts his trust.
For *Suds* scepter, then lay in the dust.

And then as now, they hop'd an earthly kinge,
But to his tale, this Sophist more doth singe.

If treasure want, thou shalt haue gold at will,
Or what thy wiſh, or pleasinge thought desireth.
If honor hight thie honor lasteth still.
While ſecreſt, our ſage and ſtate requireth.
Yea place and time, thie free conſent now hireth;

Thie maides away, do winke at thine offence,
The cloaſed dores, will with thie fact dispence.

If douteſt obiecte, our wordes in iest are ſpoken,
And that our loue is conninge deeply feigned.
Then heare by hollyſt vow, (or never broken)
VWee deeply do protest (and vncouſtraineſd)
Our ſuite is loue, by true affection trayned.

Then yeeld, if no, this armes, conſent shall drawe,
For needſwee muſt, and need obeys no lawe,

Else iſt thou doſt perſiſt, in flat deniall,
Bee hold extremes at hand, thie doome is teemed.
Adulerie, ſhall breed thie death in tryall.
So ſhalt thou dead, an hypocrite bee deemed.
So ſhall thine end, bee infamous eſteemed.
So ſhalt thou ſtaine thiſkin, and blud debaſe,
Defame thiſpheere, and baſtardize thy race.

For

The constancie of Susanna.

For we vwell knowne (graue fathers in the land)
VVil in thy trial, iudge and vvitnesse be.
By oath of two, each verdict giv'n must stand.
Our selues vwill sweare, we found embracing thee,
A bearded groome, in foule adulterie.
Then better twere, to liue and haue good name,
Then haue thy death, sepulchred in defame.

As for our selues, we haue at large debated,
VVhat shame, what infamie, this fact may gaine.
How that we may be pointed at, and hated,
Yea more then pointed; dailie die like *Cain*,
While drowping life, is burried in disdaine.
A loathsome graue, a death far worse then death,
Because the scandal, shal reviue on earth.

Thus haue we thought, what may ensue the deede,
VVho feares what *may be*, mislet: Ladies loue,
Faint hearted carpet knightes, doe seldom speede,
If feare of what *may be*, doth them reprove,
No feare shall daunt my heart, or *may bee* moue.
So strongly hath desire, enchanted me,
That I must needes, embrace mine infamie.

Sweete let vs then, feede on thy coral lippes,
If that wil not suffice, lets further feede.
For raging lust, hath gotten bedlem whippes;
And beates our heartes, so that the wounds doe bleede,
And nought can cure them, and contentment breedeth.
But thine embracings, and thy bodies vse,
Which can recure the hurt, procure thy truce,

The constancie of Susanus.

Be briefe therfore, report to vs thy minde,
If thou wilt yeld, weeke rest thy secret friendes,
If no; thou knowst what friendshipe thou shal finde.
Thou knowst who so against the streme contends,
Doth strive in vaine; his health but sickly mends.

Contract thy tale, doe not at large debate,
For know; delaies are dangerous to thy state.

Shee drown'd in gulfe of griefe, to heare him charme,
Like Hobbies pray, lies quivering in their handes.
And panting so, as if shee felt the harme,
That would ensue, if shee their will vwithstandes,
For well shee sees, their shippe stickes fast in sandes.

They care not how they beare, their wind-blown sailes,
And lesse shee knowes, what countaile best availes.

If that shee yeeld, shee is betraide to shame,
If no, shee leaues her friends, her ioies, her life.
VVhich of these two, deserves the greater blame?
To die with shame, or liue a wicked wife,
Shee schooles her wavering thoughtes, about this strife.

Shall *Susan* doe, what most shee doth detest?

Shall Cuckowes hatch their birdes, in *Ioachims* nest?

Nay rather *Susan*, die an innocent,
And render vp, a pure life-breathing spirit.
Then make thy quiet conscience, male-content:
And purchase death, and hell, for thy demerite,
For harlots shall, no heavenly seates inherite.

And sure I am; if guiltlesse heere I die,

My Habels blud, for vengeance hence will crye,

VVby

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhy then I will resigne, fond lust to these,
And fall into the handes, of God my king.
Sith far tis better, God then man to please,
For if I yeeld vnto this cursed thing,
My conscience hath, a penetrable sting.

VVhich will torment, my soule far worse then hell,
That I shal bide, more paines then tongue can tell.

The fact would aie, be written in my brow,
The blushing humor, would bewray my case.
If I should heere one say, *Adultreſſe thou,*
The reddes would rise, and muster, in my face,
As if the wordes, were ment to my disgrace.
My husbandes loving eie, in blotted booke,
VVould read my fault, imprinted in my looke;

In sleepe condemning dreames, would haunt my head,
And shamefast thoughtes, record my shameleſſe follie.
The coverings, would crie out, of *Ioachims bed,*
And say faire hypocrite, thou art vnholie,
Pull downe thy plumes, and never more be iollie.
My smiling babies, would bewray their mother,
And yeeld their fires, resemblance, to some other.

Accusing conscience, joinde with sad remorse,
VVould whip me, with remembrance of mine act.
My guiltie minde, suspition would enforce,
To thinke each whispring tongue, did tell my fact,
And smiling looks, deride my credit cract.
And that each nibled lippe, did lend a mocke,
And glauncing eie, behold a gazing stocke.

The conſancie of Sufanna.

Thus did ſhee, in her ſecret thoughtes debate,
VVhat beſt to doe; before ſh'would anſwerc make.
Meantime they long, her to contaminate.
Yet wondred at her lookeſ, before ſhee ſpake,
VVhich Angel like might moue them to forſake.
Their lewd intent, iſever milde remorse;
Or tender mercie, might their hard heartes force.

With hands diſplaide, ſhee lookeſ, vnto the ſkies;
And downe from thence, vpon th'aggrieved ground.
Which might moue ſtones to teareſ, iſ they had eieſ,
Herto beholde, which did vwith griefe abound, ſound.
Whose heart lodg'd careſ, while tongue theſe wordes doth
And eieſ gush teareſ, true tokenſ of deepe ſorrow,
Thus hearts from eieſ fell obiectes, paſſionſ borrow.

O you(quoth ſhee) that ſway Gods *Iſrael*,
Repell proud *Sathan*, vwho doth ſeeke your ſoule.
Flie, flie, for thiſ my heart doth hate as hell,
O fli with ſpeeđe, leaſt God your finnes controule,
Reſt thiſ reſolv'd, you never gaine thiſ goale.
For never ſhalt be ſaid, there lies thiſ wife,
Which left her God, to liue a brothel's life.

Some birdes and brutiſh beaſteſ, by natureſ lore,
Doe fli this faſt, as moſt abominable.
Then are you worse then they? vwho ſhould haue floſe,
Of reaſon, and in iudgement be moſt ſtable,
What doe you thiſke, Gods booke is but a bable?
O be not beaſteſ, thoughi you be made of clay,
But haue regard, vnto your ſouleſ decay.

VVhat

The constancie of Susanna.

What if I(wicked) shoulde your willes content?
What gaine you if you gaine, your whole request?
VVhy nothing worth a straw, a rush, a bent,
A small thing got will gaine your great vnrust,
For once obtainde, youle vviſh to be releaſt.

Yea loath the deede, your selues, and me (perhappes)
Therefore my Lordes, be rul'd flie afterclappes.

One droppe of poyſon, put into the cupp,
Infectes the whole, and makes it venemous.
So one bad thought, in heart once harbord vp,
Doth cause the body, to be vitious,
Then flie ſuch thoughts, as are ſo poysenous.

And let not nature, haue the vpper hand,
But ſeeke by grace, her tictementes to withstand.

Iſt not fowle ſhame, for him to miſſe the but?
Which ſhutes with levied aime, to hit the pricke?
Then tis more ſhamē, when ſtares in practiſe put,
To winne renowne, and yet like ſlaues doe ſtickle,
At honestie, O doe but note this tricke.

First know your ſelues, then what you vndertake,
So you like conquerours, ſhall ſuch finnes forſake.

Do not debaſe your blood, by base deſigne,
Your place ſhould foster, worthies free from blame.
What though your branch, hath roote in *Indias* line,
You ſhould depend, vpon deserved fame,
And not leauē all to noblenesse of name.

For nature proues, a tainture in the blood,
Where life lament, that nature is not good.

An introduction to the story.

Phie, Phie, graue Rabbies, grow to be so rash,
To royst like ruffians, and excede in sin.

Shall seasning salt, become vnsav'ry trash?

VVhat leese your selues that others seeke to win?

Shall faire without, be cloake to cloake to fowle within?

No, no; sith great ones, are example givers,

Seeme not to be, but be indeede, good livers.

Let vertue be the ground worke, of your greatnessse,
Set God your guide, in conscience bower of brasie.
For glories fort, not founded is in neatenesse,
A coursers name, doth naught beseeeme an ass,
Tis folly, phrensic, furie (out alasse.)

To stand a tiptoe, on the title point,

If life be loose, and vertue out of ioint.

You aske if I haue conned, histories?

Then know I haue, both humaine and divine,

Wherein I finde, the lasting infamies,

Of such as shrowded, vnder sinnes blacke shrine,

And how these glorious men, like starres doe shine,

In glories spheere, which haue such faultes forsaken,

And vnto vertues guide, themselues betaken.

VVhat was the cause of raging *cataclyme*,
That did with gastly waues the sinfull smallow?
But beastly life, and brutish barbarisme?

VVhile *Sodome* did, chast natures hestles vnhallow,
Who, (wantons nice) in lustes delight did wallow,

God purged the polluted place, with fire,

Maderebell lust, a subiect of his ire.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhen *Sichem* (*Hevite*) did perforne deflower,
Faire *Diana* (*Jacobs* dearling and delight)
Did not sin-hating heaven, at it lowre?
And raise revendge, for this abhord despight?
Yes twas the cause, that *Jacobs* sonnes did fight.
Gainst *Hemors* sonnes, his subiectes and his towne,
All which by them, hand-smooth were beaten downe.

What bloody warre, fierce wrath, and raging spoile,
Fell on the fatall tribe of *Beniamine*?
VVhat time the men of *Gibea*, did defile,
(By beastlie rape) the *Levites* concubine,
VVhich made their bretherne tribes, so sore repine;
That of the *Beniamites*, there lost their liues,
Fiue times, fiue thousand men, besides their wiues.

VVith *Sittim* plague, fell thowndes twentie fower,
Because they gaue their liues, to luxurie.
Did *David* scape, for that he did deflower,
Uriah wife? no sure the childe did die,
That thus was gotten, in adultery.
Yea God did sweare; the like disgrace and sword,
Should light on his, for leaving of his word.

VVhat did proud *Paris* gaine, to gad to *Greece*,
To fet that mynion, *Menelau* vvife?
(Fames *Phoenix*; beauties saint, a peerelesse peece)
Shee cost a kingdome large, and many a life,
Sardanapalus, living voide of strife.

Became lustes wanton; wallowed in her pleasure,
VWhic hlife did leele, his empire life and treasure.

The constancie of Susanna.

And well; for if the Lord in wedlocks cause,
I plague common-weales, and play the vanquisher,
When one fowle fornicator breakes his lawes,
What shall be done, to that adulterer,
The stickler of this strife, and bloody stirre?
Were he not worthy, (breeder of this bawle)
By endlesse death, to pine and die for all?

Your selues of late, (in practise of the law)
Gave doome of stoning death, for like offence.
And can desire, your heartes from right withdraw,
That lawlesse now, you can with laws dispence?
What brainfickhe humor doth your braines incense?
To deeme that fact, death worthy in an other,
Whiche you your selues, do foster, feed, and cover?

If speeches doe, but breath and labour leese;
If former waries, cannot forwarne your eares;
Then yet behold, I offer on my knees,
A sacrifice of sighes, and stormie teares,
Pity the paine, that in my looke appears.
Let these my wringed hands, awake remorse,
Vic favour (good my Lords) abuse not force.

Consider what you are: not base borne slaves,
But chiefe conductors, of Gods chosen sheepe.
Then as a crazed ship, that's toss'd with waues,
Doth let the waters, at the chinckes in creepe,
And drown'ch her selfe, withall in whelming deepe.
So you the ship, wherein your subiectes sail,
Your subiectes sink, when you beginne to fail.

There-

The constancie of Susanna.

Therefore I coniure you, by greate *lebore*,
For countreis cause, for subiectes happinesse,
Eor your deere soules estate, no further moue
Mee poore afflicted soule heere succorlesse.
O do not seeke to drowne me, in distresse.
Least now you see, old *Sodom* flaines descendinge.
Suppressie your suite, serve God who waits amending.

But what avayles, to sownd to beastes retreyt?
Or quench the blaze, that burneth in the straw?
Though Croco diles do weepe, they meane deceit.
Though Lyons cowch, they hide a hurtful paw.
So though these Lordes, be moanethe teeres they saw;
Commende her zeale, extoll her good entent,
Yet still vntamed lust, growes insolent.

The softest drops, do peirce the hardest stonnes,
Through gentle wordes, vngentle heartes will ycelde.
The tenderest *zansho*, softneth toughest boanes.
Milde musick can, mad beastes allure and weyld.
Then are your stubborne heades, so strongly steeled?
Or are your heartes so heard, so rough, so ferre,
That nought can enter, soften, seal on, peirce?

Behold the melting teeres, this ladie sheds,
Behold what greet, lies harbord in her heart,
Behold what modeitie, her over-spredes.
Behold how soare, the wound vnmade doth smart,
Behold her soule, repining at this parte.
Behold hart-renting sobbes, assault your eies,
Behold vp heaved handes, for mercie cryes.

The constancie of Susanna.

But as the wilfull *Affis*, stoppes her eare;
VVhen charmers chaunting wordes,(like baites entise)
So these enchaunted adders, will not heere,
The wordes of health, or wisedomes sound advise,
So bendedd will, is bent to winne the price.

That neither may, this ladies plaint or moane,
Make pitty pierce, their heartes more hard then stone.

For when her hearts, deepe oracles were ended;
And that they saw such resolution in her.
VWhile chasteſt faire, faire chastitie defended,
Gainſt thoſe who ſought, with fawning wordes to win her,
As farre from hope, as though they had not ſeen her.

Perswaded now, faint means would marre their matter,
Her with ſtrong hands,(weak fort)they ſeeke to batter,

For Savage *Satyre*-like, they vould uncover,
VVhat baſhfull nature, biddeth ſecreat hide.
And close as hungrie Ravens, they doe hover,
To doe that great disgrace, ſhee may not bide,
But when ſhee ſaw, foule luſt was at full tide.

And that her lingring girlies, did ſtay ſo long,
Shee criid amaine, before ſhee felt the wrong.

Help, help (ſhee ſaith) help, help I am vndone,
O help a wofull wretch, in wretched caſe.
At which her crie, the iunior iudge doth ronne,
And open ſettes, the garden dore (apafe)
As if ſome felon fled, out of the place.

And ſhee for helpe, doth not ſo often crie,
But they as fast, ſtop, keepe, the thiefe doth flie.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The servant es netled, with this suddaine noyes,
Of help, help, help, stop, keepe, the theif doth flic-
Ronne to the posterne gate, (maydes men and boyes)
To find the author, of this mutinie.

(The cursed cause, of that lamenting crye)

VVho staring, gazing gaping ronne aboute,
Like men amazde, to find their mistresse out.

At length they do desire, their ladie faire.

Her beautie blemished, with blubbring teeres.

(As *Phebe* mantled, with the mystie aire,

VVith watrish beames, vnto the sight appeeres)

Officious dutie, bids her bannish feares.

Relate her hap and let her heart be stonge.

VVhere hands and hearts, are vowd to right her wrong.

But shes good ladie, that did deeme her groomes,

Vnequall vmpires, of her high disgrace,

Leaves her bad hap, vnto their better doomes,

And by herselfe aloane, with drawes the place.

And beares her greif, imprented in her face.

That *Ioachims* eie might see, and seeing rew,

Her wronged faith, in her deformed hewe.

VVho when he saw his love, and his lives breath,

To quake in ev'ry parte, (as *palse* shaken) |

And cheeke, and lip, to looke as pale as death.

VVhome fresh (life feeding) humour had forsaken.

Himselfe by fainting feare, is overtaken.

But when he sees, her sinkinge to the ground,

With girdling armes, he doth embrace her royd,

And

The constancie of Susanna.

And sobbing wordes, through his tongue stopping teeres,
He saith, O sweete, sweete heart vnfolde thy griefe.
O speake my loue, and bannish bashfull feeres.
Heere is a hand, shall yeeld thee lardge relieve.
VVhose hearts true tenure holdes of thee in *chiefe*,
If all the world, should vow t' ware wrong'd by thee,
Yet should it not appeare, a wrong to me.

At vwhich his quickning wordes (as *Phæbus* shine
With powerfull beames, and heat vegetatiue,
Vnshrowdes the earth, from her congealed shrine,
And makes the wythering shrubbe, and grasse reviuue,
So shee begins to spring, and seeme alive.

And vwith her faltring tongue (yet all a mort)
Of traitorous men, doth render true report.

And as we blame missfortunes, in their bringers,
Shee blames her maides, as fawtors of her wrong,
Shee feeles impatient fitnes, and they her fingers,
That durst negle~~e~~t their due returne so long,
Whose sad excuse, (permixt with teares amonge.)
To seeke the thinges, her selfe had laide amisse,
Return'd her selfe the blame, that wrong'd her blisse.

Meane time, the vnresolved servaunts feare it,
VVhat spitefull ill, their lady did surprize.
And though their itching eares, did long to heare it,
Yet taking heartes, did rather *sympathize*,
Then know from whence, their passions did arise.
At length with bashfull boldnesse, and good grace,
They aske the *seniors*, of their mistresse case.

Whoſe

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose irefull eies, when first they did behold,
This giddie rowt, (to presse with speed in place)
Did first condemne their deede, as overbold.

VVhile fainting hope, did much distrust their case.
Their lustfull heartes, did murtring thoughtes embrace,
For baishfull nature, once to boldnesse bent,
Growes shamelesse bold, and boldly impudent.

And as a hoot and eagre dogge in hand,
VVhen he beholdes, his game before his eies.
Doth fawne, and leape, & licke, to loose his band,
But when he sees, him keeper surer ties,
Then feirce against him, hee begines to rise,
So they when fawning, could not win their wil,
Rayse like curst cures, and have a minde to kill.

For to the sad demaundantes, there they say,
Heere fownd we *Susann*, in adulterye,
Whose yongue companion, fled from hence away,
Bee fore we could, what wight he was descrie.
Beleeve vs (gentle frendes) we tell no lie.
For these our eies, are witnessles, we saw them.
And here's the place, to which thee did with draw the.

VVhich cursed sight, did so our eies offend,
(And much the more for noble *Ioachims* sake
Our honorable kinsman and good frend)
That we did do our best, the groome, to take:
That speedie death, (for wrong) a mendes might make.
But he for vs, to nimble at strong hand,
Fled by that dore, which yet doth open stand.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The dutious servitors with bashfull brow,
Blush now with sylent shame, at this her fact.
Who never (till that day) was thought to bow,
Vnto so base a sin, or vile an act.
Wherefore they did suspect, some plot compact,
And in her cause, would shape some sharp replies,
VVell armed in her right to giue the lie.

But when they saw, those elders of the land,
VVere vouchers of the fact, and filthie deed.
They darst not contradict them, or withstand.
And yet their inward partes, were touch'd with meed,
To thinke how ill(poore pris'ner) shee shold speed,
When as the judges mouth,(the witnesse breath)
Should verdict giue, that giues the doome of death.

And so sad men, greife laden home they go,
To prie what comfort, in their ladies looke.
And leaue these judges, plotting of her woe.
VVho straight the way, vnto their howses tooke,
Where they their goodly being, badly brooke.
While eare enuie, restlesse doth invent,
The overthrowe, of this chast innocent.

O Envie wayward witch, fowle hagge of hel,
Whie doſt thou make men pine, at mens prosperitie?
O you fond fooles, that in her den do dwel,
And theare torment your ſelues, with her ſeueritie,
VVhose ſlauie is flannder, and her page Temeritie.
Whie waſt you, restlesſe ſeruice on a dame,
That reſtlesſe wiſheth, vertues ſeruantes shame;

The constancie of Susanna.

Pale fretting furie, furious sorceresse,
Bel-daine to madnesse, and yoake mate to woe.
Thy mother pride, a mortal murtheresse,
Thy father *Plutus*, mans immortall foe.
Thy brattes blood shedding hate, that hath no hoe.
Contention, strife, debate, revenge, and slander,
Vvhich vex the life, and after death do wander.

Thy guttes are gald, cholers boyling fome,
Like *Aeneas* wombe, that belkes sulphurous flames,
Thy cabbin carrin thoughtes, a hell thy home.
Thy habite like, those fierce *Tartarian* dames,
Vvhose flesh consum'd, there resteth but the rames.
For while thou know'lt not how, to hold a meane.
To eate thy neighbors fatlings, makes thee leane.

Their hartes haue anguylsh, soules haue bitternesse.
Vvheme thou dost learne, to laugh at vertues woe,
Thy path is blind, and pau'd with slippernesse.
They walke to hell, that in thy wayes do goe.
Yet are these elders thine, devoted so,
That liuing now, they liue but to deprive,
The life of her, they loath to see aliue.

The filthic toades, infect the fountaines cleere.
Where others sucke, the venome that they leauē.
And serpentes spue, their poysone everie wheare,
Vvhich yet them selues, do not of life bereave.
But these false seniors, do themselues deceave.
That spet foorth enuies, venome on this dame,
Yet kill them selues, by sucking in the same.

For

The constancie of Susanna.

For on the following day, of this disgrace,
The iudges with the people, make repaire,
To keepe thier vsuall courts, in wonted place,
In Iosechims house (a spacious roome and faire)
VVhere feble hope, vpholdeth faint dispaire.

VVhile their blud-thristie thoughtes, do wholie long,
To do her faine, and body deadly wronge,

And mounted on, the pow'rfull seat of life,
They wil their summ' nors, to ascite and call,
Susan, (*Iosechias daughter, Iosechims wife*)
To make appearance there before them all.
And answe're in an action criminall.

Thus they pretend with right, roote out evilles,
But whic should right be prophand in such diuelles,

And shee good lady, (loyall to the lawes)
(Armed with assurance, of her innocence.
And guarded with the goodnesse, of her cause.
In conscience brazen fortresse of defence)
Feignes none excuse, or shifting slie pretence.
But doth obey the summons, and proceed.
And leaves to God th' event of her good speede.

And so attended, with a mourning traine,
Shee makes appearance, in the fatall place,
VVhere standers by, cannot from teeres refraine,
To see the gallant pris'ners, wofull case.
Her pheere, her frendes, her parentes, children race,
Replete the ayre with woes, and grownd with teeres,
VVhile heartes e clipse, in clowded eie appeeres.

VWhers

The constancie of Susanna.

And standing in a robe, of finest blacke,
(Deepe sorrowes signe, by causlesse infamie)
There overspreades her shoulders head and backe;
Availe of lawne, (to note integritie)
Which hid her whiter beautie, from the eie.
This shadow they commaund, to be removed.
That they at least might looke ion what they loued;

Which when th' officious officers, had done.
Sweete beauties blush, did yeeld her such a grace;
As when a clowd, is taken from the sonne.
VVhen sorrow suckes, the reds forth of her face,
The machlesse white, aloane doth hold the place.
But when the cymyon humor, steines the white;
Corall seeimes shadowed, in the *Galactice*.

Such is the beautie, that enchauntes their eies.
And charmes their heartes, through it so sore attaynted.
That they both God and goodnesse do despise.
And vwith noughe else, but sin are novv acquainted.
O That shée should, with such faire shape be painted,
To make commaunders mindes, to lust obey.
And shée her selfe, exposed for their pray.

For when they had full gordgd, their ravenous eies;
On beauties dainties, (with a ihort repast)
They two amid'it, the people do aryse,
To giue their witnesse, against this constante chaste.
And as the law doth will, their handes they plast,
Vppon the head, of this pure innocent.
(Two woulves soule pawes, a scely lamb to rent)

The constancie of Susanna.

VVheare swearing by Gods name, a solemne oath,
To set aside, all partiall loue and hate,
And speake the truth, and nothing but the troth.
Periured judges (foes to truthes estate)
Vnto the people, thus they intymate.

This noble dame, that shewd a lant in sight,
Is fownd vnconstant, tickle, lewd, and light,

For yesterday, in *Ioachims* orchard walkinge,
To recreate our sptridges, with holesome ayre,
This dame with her two damselles, thither stalkinge,
Theare did to her, an vnknowne youth repayre.

VWhose shape was comly, and his feature fayre.

But er he came in sight, that none detect it,
Her madens shewd dismest least they suspect it.

VVhoe being gone, and dores ybarred fast,
VVee (shrowded from their sight) with wakefull heed
Perceu'd the wicked, to their sin make haft.
And creaping cloasly, with conuenient speed,
Wee did surprize them, in the shamfull deede.

And him we caught, but yet away he fled.
For him from vs, his strength delivered.

But her we held, and theare examined,
VVhat youth he was, that did her bodie vse.
And though confessing shame did die her red,
Yet to resolute our doupt shewd she did refuse.
And with still sylence did her selfe accuse.

Thus haue we shewd the fact, of this lewd wife.
For which misdeed, law biddes her lose her life.

The constancie of Susanna.

Shee all this space, with patience on her knee,
VVith handes and eies, vp-reared to the skie,
Commends her cause to God, which all doth see.
VWhile groaning spirite, in anguish plundgd doth crye,
Help, help, me God, or else in shame I die.
Thou rul'st right, then stretch thine arme so strong,
And overrule the rulers of this wronge.

While thus shee doth appeale vnto the highest,
Her burning zeale doth plead her innocence,
Her modest looke, doth say, false iudge thou liest.
Her balifull sylence, speakes in her defence
Her good reporte, reproves their ill pretence
The streames of teares, that on her cheeke ar spilt,
By secreat verdict, quittes her from the guilt,

Yet much amaz'd, to here this divell speake,
(For well shee wist no manlike mind he bore)
Shee shapes him answere, else her heart would breaked
Although her tormentes, shoulde much the more,
Shee saw pale death attending at the dore.
To take her thence, if that shee held her peace,
And if shee speake, shee could not death increase.

VVherefore ev'n as a man, that's sencelesse stroken,
VWhen as he commes, vnto himselfe againe,
And feeles his bodie, wonnded, bruf'd, or broken,
By swarting cause, cannot from wrath refraine,
But lettech flic, his irefull blowes amaine.
Ev'n so her conscience, netted by dispight,
Fights with fierce words, weake champions of her right.

The constancie of Susanna.

O admirable patience (sayth shee)
And depth interachable of Gods intent,
Whether this happe for tryall vnto me,
Or for these helhownds, greater punishment,
Hee onely knowes, which onely hath it sent.

VVhie doth he not, with righteous hand reppresse,
This scum of sin and filth of filthiness?

VVhie did not wombe, before these babes did sprawle,
Abhorre such seede, vnworthie for the brests.

VVhie entred life, within such bitter gaule?

VVhie harbour soules, within such filthie nestes?

Whic did the ayre, giue breathing to such beastes?

Whie did the heav'nes, permit so fowle an eie,
For to behould, the pure vnspotted skie?

Whie did not nature, mould deformed clay,
So fowle mishappen mindes, for to ingerth?

Whie swell not floudes, and swiftly sweape away,
This seede of Cain, from the polluted earth?

Whie did not hell, devoure them in the birth?

VVhie do not angrie elementes, conspire,
To powre vpon them, hoat consuming fire?

Whie did the earth, eate Corach and his crewe,
And suffer these to trample on her browe?

VVhie did wilde beares, those idoll ympes subdue,
And do wilde beastes, these beastes to liue allowe?

Whie do not thunderboltes, enforce them bowe?

What should I say? whie doth not God in ruth,
Commaund each power, to punish their vngenthe?

The constancie of Susanna.

But thou O Lord, art free from this offence,
VVhen ray'ning woulves such feely lambes devower,
Thou righteous, dost not punish innocence.
Tis not thy worke, tis they abuse thy power,
Thy power is iust, the imperfection our.

The aire is good, that doth the voice dispence,
Though faultly vnde, to giue false evidence.

Then iudges (most vniust) behold the skies,
Thinke thear's a God, those glorious globes that guide:
Let not despaire, your soules deere health dispise,
But haue regard, what law you goe besides,
Perpend in deepest thought God not abides.

Such wrathfull *Cams*, as vvaſt the guiltleſſe blood,
Then haue respect to me, for your owne good.

Perchance you thinke, your finnes ſo farre exceede,
That God is never able, to forgiue.
O flie thofe thoughtes, which iuft destruction breedē,
And that our God, is mercifull belieue.
Doe not ſo willingly, to darke hell diue.
But theſe your haynous deedes, from heart iepent,
And God will then, remit finnes punishment.

Let not fowle ſin, be ſeeded in your age,
Let not your vertues die, before they ſpring.
Doe not commit on me, ſo great outrage,
But let true iuſtice rule, in ev'rie thing,
Conſider what defame, ſuch wrong will bring.

VVhat doe you thinke, God ſees not what you doe?
Yes ſure he doth, then haue respect thereto.

The constancie of Susanna.

Your conscience can controule, your heartes of follie,
Your hearts can say, your tongues doe falsehood tell,
Your tongues can tell, your action is vnholy,
To wrong a feely woman, meaning vwell,
And hating this offence, as hatefull hell.

Let pittie raise remorse, and bantish wronge,
Be not to stout, because you are to strong.;

But if your heartes blood-hardned still remaine,
To shed her blood, that hath no lawes offendred.
Then worke your wils on me, (O sonnes of *Cam*)
VVould God in this good cause, my life were ended,
So that your liues, and manners were amended.

VVhich if you doe not right, with speedy pace,
Mine honors wrong, your honors will deface.

A tree but young, one may both bow and bend;
VVhen as the old, will hardly bend at all.
A whelpe with trickes, is taught to fetch and send,
VVhen as old dogges, to it you hardly hall,
VVho can reclaime, wilde haggards to the call?
Even so these men that seal ned are in sin,
To serue the Lord cannot tell how begin,

For when they heard, this oratresses tale,
VVith constant speach, and gesture so declaimed,
Fierce envies fretting poysen, made them pale,
Fearing to misse the marke, whereat they aimed,
They doe inferre it falsehood, merely feigned.

To frustrate iustice, with a sly perswasion,
And from deserved death, to make evasion,

The constancie of Susanna.

No credit giue (say they) this cunning dame,
Which with lip-lavish wordes, woul'd shif her death.
A man huge myriades of vntrutches, would frame.
If he by them, could buy life, feeding breath.
Is not a judges word, that witnesleth?

Is not our oath confirmed vwith our hand?

VVhat two doe vvitnesle, law doth will to stand.

VVhich said; they do proceede to doome of death,
(By processe had from the imperiall state)
And one the dolefull sentence, vttereth;
Shee should be led, foorth of the citie gate,
And there (as *Moses* doth the law relate)
The multitude (a fickle wavering head)
Should presse her downe, with stones til she were dead.

Thus doth the law, by witnesse wrested deale,
Thus is the vertuous dame condemn'd to die,
The judge reicthes, the husbandes graue appeale,
He stops his eares, at parentes sad reply.
He will not heare, the infantes wofull cry.
(No doubt a pale that godly land doth flourish,
VVhich doth such lust-affested judges nourish.)

But loath to be interred in shames nest,
Stab'd with heart-wounding wordes, falleth on her knee,
Shee wakes her thoughtes, with thumping on her brest,
Flies to her last refuge, to set her free.
Entreats her God, with humble teeres that hee.
VVould not for sake, or leaue her in distresse,
But send his comfort, to her comfortlesse.

The constancie of Susanna.

O righteous God, my judge (saith shee)
VVhich seest the secret heart,
And dost inflict, revenge on those,
That doe thy lawes subvert.

Represse the pride of tyrants stout,
VVhich doe my life assaile.
Heere now and helpe, thy handmaide helpe,
For helpe of man doth fail.

Do not expose me for their pray,
Because they doe not right,
But hunt in heart to bring about,
That's hatefull in thy sight,

And of a meere malicious minde,
False witnessesse heere haue brought,
And causesse laid vnto my chardge,
The things I never thought.

Thou seest (my God) vwhat they haue done,
Thou seest their envious heart.
Thou knowst they sought to lawlesse lust,
Thine hand-made to convert.

Thou knowst, I dread not daring death,
Ne force his might a pin.
No, no, I doe desire to die,
A better life to win.

An introduction to the story.

I tender not faire beauties trash,

I tender my good name,

Least leesing life,I be by death,

Entombed in detame.

For this cause rise(O Lord)make hast,

Repell my soules despight.

And shew the nations,farre and neere,

How much thou tendrest right.

I know my sinnes are passing great,

VVhich acted are each hower.

Yet let my teeres thy mercy treate,

And shield me with thy power.

If no(defamed wretch)I die,

For keeping of thy law,

And causlesse thou shalt seeme(my God)

Thy comfort to withdraw.

Hast then O Lord,make hast I say,

Least guiltlesse blood be spilt.

Yet not my will be done in this,

But be it as thou vvlst.

VVhen shee her godly,oraysons had ended,

And that no meanes was left, to make delay.

The fawning officers,in court attended,

VVith prophane handes,to hale her thence away,

And though shee were as readie to obey,

Yet still this soare, doth smart in guiltlesse minde,

That shee should leaue,an ill report behinde.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhen once the streetes, did act this tragedie,
Vaultes, and resounding Echoes from the stones,
Reporte the mothers teeres, her childrens crie,
Her parentes plaintes, her husbandes hideous moanes,
Her kinfolkes sighes, her friendes heart-breaking grones,
The peoples pleading tongues, to God to free her,
VWhile thicke tumultuous troopes, doe run to see her,

VWho passing foorth, with passing seemely port,
(Her looke abated, with her languishment.)
Shee doth the gazing lookers on, exhort.
Good people pray for me, poore innocent,
Thats gultlesse, faultlesse, free, from al intent,
Of this misdeede, for which weake wretch I die,
VWhome still with deepest hate, I did defie.

VWhile thus with plaintes, they doe Gods aide implore,
The Lord did heere, and helpe her wofull case,
For as when tyrant Pharaob, scepter bore,
(A Pharaob fierce, that knew not Iosaphes face)
And did the Israelites, oppresse long space.
They being tyred, with his tirannie,
In deepest griefe, ynto Gods favor flie.

VWho when their moanes, did mount vnto his sight,
Did single foorth, their speedy preservacion.
From Pharaos traine, a courtly trained wight,
Moses (an Hebrew borne) by education,
His daughters sonne (which bred his estimation)
So now; God seeing, *Susans* great distresse,
Ev'n in the nicke did speeche her due redresse.

The constancie of Susanna.

For in the *Chaldean* court, did then attend,
A noble *Iew*(a youngling for his yeares)
The monarches mynion; and his chiefest friend;
One of his sage and sharpest fighted *Seeres*,
In which high feate, he past his graue compeeres,
While *Isrels* God, did reare his fortunes hie,
To beare a stroake, in *Abas* maiestie.

He *Daniel* cleaped, by his natiuue name,
(The *Chaldees* calld him, noble *Balhazer*)
VVhom neither courtly glee, nor phrase of fame,
Could in faire *Sions* zeale, ought make or marre,
But would(to keepe the captiuue *Iewes* from iar)
In private sort, at tiynes repaire and prie,
Into his brethernes state, with wakefull eie,

And standing now, in this tumultuous thronge,
Hee saw blinde zeale, imployd in good pretence.
VVhat time Gods truth, enform'd him of the wrong,
And raisd his sp'rite to speake in her defence,
Bad him be bold, to plead her innocence.
Step foorth in place, doe not thy thoughtes conceale,
Cry out amaine, from divellish doome appeale.

Then *Daniell*(as the Lord commaunded him)
Cride in the streetes; *I from this blood am cleane*,
VVhile gazing heerers, looked sowre and grim,
To muse what these, vnlook'd for wordes should meane.
Fowle toades(sayth he) infect the christall streme,
Because you would the streme farre purer finde,
You kill the fish, but leaue the toades behinde.

The constancie of Susanna.

Are you such sots, O seede of Israell?
Are you so blind, you see not what you do?
Are you so deafe you heare not what they tel?
Know you not right, and what bee longes thearto.
Survey you not, your steppes before you goe?
Whie haue yov heere, condemnd this dame to dies
And would not heere her iust appeale and crie?

O turne with speed, turne to the iudgment seate.
And then behould, what God will thear relate.
Your seviors sinnes, haue growne exceeding greate.
Repelled lust, ingendring with foule hate,
In them the bastard periurie, begate.

Bold periurie did breed false witnesse bearing,
False witnesse wrested iudgments, by for-swearung.

At which his wordes, the people yonge and olde
Do make a stand and backwardes thence retire.
Whear daunting sins, the seniours heartes make cold.
While daunger woundes, the depth of their desire.
Yet past shams bowndes, their shamlesse thoughts aspire
And foorth they passe, into the sessions hall,
And hide in crabbed brow, their conscience gaule.

The elders of this circumfized race,
(Which with repriued pris'our turne a ge'n)
When ev'rie one, had ta'ne his vsuall place,
They say vnto this stately stripling then,
Vse thou the rooine, of these malitious men.

Declare to vs, Gods iudgments and decree.
Sith God hath giv'n, an elders spirite to thee,

Then

The constancie of Susanna;

Then Daniell tooke, the powerfull place of life.

And thear to intimate, Gods will to all:

Where are (quoth he) the wrongers of this wifes?

Put them a parte, out of each others call,

And bring forth one (by one) in to the hall.

So you shall see, their traytrouse tonges reveale;

What wicked heartes, do cover and conceale.

The formall officers, performe his mind.

And brought forth one, to be examined,

Who lookd like murthrous marked Cain, vnkind,

When brothers blood, he guiltlessly had shed.

His colour shew'd, what harbord in his head.

His ioyntes (as if vniyoyned) were at iarre,

Falſe iudge (now pris'ner) pleading at the barre.

And standing thus, before the balefull bench,
The beardless iudge (to checke him vncontrold
That conscience as a cooling carde might quench,
The heate of his bravado overbold)

Saith, thou fin seafned wretch, that waxest olde

In fin thy wicked life is come to light.

Whose falſhood harmed, manie a harmleſſe wight.

Thou hast abuf'd thy life, God lent to thee,

To mend thy life, and passed sins repent.

For nothing but oppreſſions, he could ſee.

Therefore he will, thic glorie from thee rent,

Which haſt condemnd, to death an innocent.

And let the guiltie, goe for giftes a way.

VWhile luſt and bribeſ, did blind thee day by day;

Sixt

The constancie of Susanna.

Sith sworne thou hast, (eie witnesse) thou didst see,
This comely dame, with her companion sin :
Report the trurh; and name to vs the tree,
That hid the fact, you did surprise them in.
Pause not but speake, (if wordes shall credite win)
Be briefe, let not oblivion beare the blot,
Things done so late, are not so soone forgot.

Then pawsing twixt despaire, and tyred hope,
(As one that had no constant yea, nor nay)
VVould faine intreate, some longer tyme and scope,
But that he findes impatience in delay,
VWhile to himselfe he faies, shal I obey?
Confesse my fault wherein I haue offended,
And pardon craue that all may be amended?

No, no my heart shall never stoope so low,
To bow to those, that vsde to bende to me.
I am not sure, what favour such will shew,
Wherefore I wil devise, some kinde of tree,
VWhose braunching bowghes, might shrowd adulterie.
Thus reasons he (a bird of *Balam's* brood)
That will not be reclaim'd, to any good.

At last he gapes for breath yet doubtes to speake,
(Because his partners doubtes he doth not know)
Yet through his teeth, this tragique tale doth breake,
(VWhile foaming furie makes him puffe and blow)
Saith he in *Joachims* orchard, there doth grow,
A *Mastick* tree, whose braunches clowd the sonne,
In whose darke shade, the brothels act was done.

VWhen

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhen Daniell heard, this vuncomposed speach,
False are (quoth he) the wordes thou dost report.
Thy lying lippes, thee partiall doe appeach,
Gods minde to me reavealed; doth exhort,
Thy sinfull bodie, from thy soule to sort.
As one (deserving endlesse death to die)
That darst, against God, and conscience swere a lie.

VVhen this was acted, him they lead away,
And bring his brother foorth, in open place,
In whose fell heart (fowle cabbin) envie lay,
Her wilde and staring looke, sate in his face,
(A wrinkled brovv, a pale, and megre grace.
Did murther, mischiefe, mallice fierce, resemble)
While cōscience cold, doth cause him quake & trēble,

To whom younge Daniell saith in zealous mood;
O seed of cursed Cbam, ympe of dispright.
In vaine thy vaunt, doth boast of Iuda blood,
VVhen as thou art, in life a Cananite,
True nobles should, in noble actes delight.
But thou bewitch'd vwith beautie, weart beguiled,
When thy misleading lust, thine heart defiled.

Thus haue you past, your passed liues ill-spent,
Since first your wanton heartes, did traime you in,
To draw the dames of Israell, to your bent.
Whom you with feare did force, and flattery win,
To ioinc with you, in acting secreat sinne.
But this chaste Iewish heere, of Iuda race,
Resisted hath, your follie to your face.

Now

The constancie of Susanna.

Now sith thy tongue, hath testifide an act,

VVhich fame did not reporte but eie did vewe

And thou death worthie, deemed hast the fact.

Dissemble not be still a witnesse true.

Tell vs what tree, and in what place it grew,

VVhose shamlesse ihad, did shrowd this shamfull sin.

Pause ere thou speake, yet speake, and soone begin.

Hee grayfield now in greife, and greate dispaire

(Like bowged barge, that sinkes in swallowing sandes)

Gapes ere he speakes, as if he wanted ayre.

VVhich oft with cloased lippes, he countemaundes,

At length (faire he) in *Ioachims* orchard standes,

Neere fowntain faire, a greene thick braunching *Holly*,

Vnder whose shad, these wicked wrought their folly.

Quoth *Danie* then, your tongues haue yon betrayd.

Your forged lie, shall light vpon your pates.

Your wicked heartes, your wordes haue heere bewrayd.

The sword of *Injustice* (that iniustice hates)

Is readie heere, to slay you (sinfull mates)

Provide therefore a treble death to die,

Of bodie, soule, and lasting infamie.

For as you boath, haue causlesse sought to spill,

The guiltlesse blood, of this chast *Israelite*,

By witnesse false, therfore doth *Moses* will,

Your blood be shed; and we will doe you right,

Sith that your tongues, death-worthy you indite.

You shall be led, where shee should leese her breath,

And there with stones, your sclues be done to death.

The constancie of Susanna.

Which doome did much delight, the standers by,
With greate applause, the people do reioyce.
They clap their handes, and fling their cappes on hie,
The roose reflettes, the Echo of their voyce.
VWhile thankfull heartes, their eies to heav'n vphoice,
And tongues pronownce, *Our God be prayzed ever,*
Vvhich helpeth his and doth forsake them never.

These judges thus disgraced, from their states,
The multitudewith readinesse, doth ronne,
To doe that doome, on these condemned mates,
They to acquitted *Susann*, would haue donne.
VWhile zeale would act, what wrong had ill beegonne.
Thus carelesse commons, right or wrong support,
When they are swayd, as soveraignes do exhort.

For as in man, when vapoures vex the braines,
The giddie head, doth feele a whirling fit.
So sick'le heads, to feed superiours vaines,
(When as affection, holdes the seate of wit)
Sway to and fro, as ruling vapours flit.
If they say yea, an yea doth answere stand,
If they say no, a no is prest at hand.

And yet(sometimes though sotted with content
That everie aet doth seeme, to breed their ease)
Some whiles(when wayward vapors gets a vent)
A toy(the least occasion doth displease)
VWhile thoughts do eb, and flow like surging seas.
For who so deales, with multitudes he findes,
In manie heades, a multitude of mindes.

The constancie of Sufanuu:

While heartes do harbour, heapes of homely toyes,
And heades are fraught with *Chaos* of conceiptes,
There comes continuall trade, of chaunging toyes.
Which barter novelties, for elder feates.
As chaunging time, doth offer choice of cheates.

So those which yesterday, wrought wrong with might,
Are busied now, in acting of the right.

For now with hast they hal them from the barre,
Whome late before, I they heaved to the benthc.
No treatie could, a day their death deferre.
While teeres the peoples furie, could not quentch.
Which drue them forth, vnto the fatall trench.

And (piniond) bownd them to the stubborne stake,
Where they their wel-deserved death should take.

Who living now forlorne (past liffes repaire)
Haue not the heart, Gods mercie to intreat,
But rather seeke with *Sau* in deepe dispaire,
VVith bluddie murtring handes, life to defeate,
VVhile aginst the stake their handes they bawle and beat.
And mind in vaine, their dreame their fall their hight.
VWho wanted grace, to take Gods warning right.

The pityng people pray, God turne their hartes,
But when they see, repentance place had none,
To yeeld those reprobates, their due deserts,
The happiest man, doth hurle the heaviest stone.
To make them gittie, the last life-yeelding grone.

VVhich done they part and leave the ded, their roome;
And lawd the lord, and *Dam* for his doome.

VWhome

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhome God had made selected instrument,
To overthrow these wicked and vnjust.
And sauē the blood, of this chaste innocent.
That with stoute *Constancie* resisted lust,
And did not in distresse, defrawd her trust.

But saw her teeres, and heard her plainting voyce.
VVhich made the hearts of thowzandes to rejoyce.

Amongst the rest (whose heartes sweet comfort cheeres)
Helchus happie man, and his compeere,
(which erst did weepe for woe) shed ioyfull teeres.
VVhen *Ioachim* ioy, had past this plunging feare,
And kinſfolkes clowded eie, shone bright and cleere.
All with sweete noates consent, in *Susans* name,
Praise God, that had preserv'd her from defame.

But cheifly slice (like larke on mounting winges)
VVhile inward zeale, breakes out in open light,
Tryumphing in her tunes, most sweetely singes,
The prayse of God, his mercie, and his might,
That did relive her wretch and wronged wight.
And iustly judge her foes, the death to die.
That would entombe her fame, in infamie

Yea while her silent heart, doth thankes record,
Her restlesse notes, do reach beyond the skie.
VVhose endlesse ioy, was in her gratiouſ Lord.
To him in hymnes, and tuned psalmodie.
(VVhich did transmūte, her mones to melodie)
ſhee gives the glorie of her victories,
As *David* when he foyl'd his enemies.

The constancie of S. fauand.

The mighty Lord (saith shee)
Is my defence and might.
My king, my guide, my God;
My champion, for to fight.

The combate of my truth and conscience triall.

He is my Anchor-hold,
My refuge, rest, and port.
My horne of saving health,
and eke my strongest fort.

Gainst whose comand, there standeth no denial.

VVhen over-flowing floodes,
Of raging fierce despight.
And great commaund, of Lordes
And men of power and might,

With dreadful threats of death, did make me qui-
I did implore his aide, (ver.
In deepenesse of distresse.

VVho heard my iust complaint,
And wrought my due redresse.

He sent me aide, and did my soule deliver.

On him therefore I will,
In danger crie and call.

VVho can both heere and helpe,
(He heeres and helpeth all)

He(none but he) is worthie to be praised.

Deathes swallowing sorrowes hem'd,
Me round on ev'rie side.

VVith renting paines of hel,
In danger to haue diide.

But he my life, from ravening graue hath raised.

The confancie of Sufenne.

He from my strongest foes,
Hath set me captiue free.
Because he had a loue,
And favour vnto me.
Whō cunningly they sought to haue prevented,
But while he held me vp,
I could not swaie nor swarue.
They sought in vaine to spill,
The thing he did preserve,
And so to late (their labour lost) repenged.

By him I made escape,
From handes of Tyrantes stout,
His power did put them downe,
And helpe his hand-maide out.
That power also, will strongly keep them ynder,
He trampleth with his feete,
Bold traitours that rebell.
He makes their hurtfull tongues,
Their owne destruction tell.
Thus for his saintes, he achteth workes of wonder.

VVhose workes are all divine,
VVhose mercies manifold.
His waies past finding out,
his word as finest gold.
His iudgement iust, his providence vnspotted.
O let thine arme O Lord,
My feeble hand susteine.
O let thy holy sp'rite,
VVithin my heart remaine,
O let thy loue be full to me allotted.

The confancie of Susanna.

I looke with wakefull eies,
Vnto thine holy lawes.

Thy statutes are my staffe,
And stay in ev'ry cause.

To doe thy will, my will I finde affected.

That which I see is ill,
And hatefull in thy sight,
That doe I seeke to shun,
And flie with maine and might,

Least that my soule, by sin should be infected.

Thou art a living God,
Oblest be thou my king.

VVhich hast thy servant freed,
From tempting *Sathan* sting.

And reard my fame on high (by wicked wróged)
And hast confounded them,
That sought my greatest ill,
By working of my heart,
Vnto a wicked will.

To act such lewd desygnes, as lust had longing.

They sought to end my life,
And gave me doome to die.

Because my holy faith,
I would not falsifie. (listed.)

Pretending right, they wroke what wrong them.

They vsed power to put,
Integritie to shame.

And ment an innocent,
To burie in defame. (fled.)

Hadst thou not (Lord) their judgement false refus,

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus hast thou bin (my God)
Most mercifull to me.
Not wonne by my desert,
But of thy mercie free,
My workes (I know) deserue to be rejected,
But thy kinde promise made,
To helpe the godlie heartes,
Doth binde thee more then all,
Our deedes or good desertes,
To keepe, protect, and saue, thy saintes elected,

Therefore I will sowne foorth,
Thy praise to ev'rie eare,
And shew thine endlesse power,
To nations farre and neare,
To *Sathan* and his kingdomes, great confusion,
I haue bin, am, and will
Remaine thine handmaide still.
Mine heart, my thoughtes, mine eies,
Shall waite vpon thy will.
This is my vow, and settled resolution.

Thus did shee spend, her following time of life,
In heavens contemplation, and delight.
And lived long, a ioious happie wife,
Of passing cariage, and a worthie wight,
A foe to frawd, and fastest friend to right.

VWho living in the world, no worldling was,
But prest to bring a world of good to passe.

The constancie of Susanna.

And as a bird, escaped from the ginnes,
Thinkest ev'ry bended twigge, to be a trappes;
So shee, that dangerously, had snared bin,
(VVith true remembrance of her former hap)
Surveyes her steppes, to shunne each afterclap.

And feares to give a fawning eie good grace,
In old, or young, in noble, or in base.

At length when age, had plotted lifes decay;
And sicknesse wrought, in weakenesse more and more.
And that shee thought, death had no long delay.
Shee calld her children, taught in godlie lore,
And did bestow these precepts kept in store.

VWho come in place, (with dutious loving hearts)
Shee thus to them, her carefull minde impartes,

Deare children cease, with sad lamenting griefe,
And malancholick moanes, to waile my state.
Your sobbing hearts doe yeeld me no reliefe,
But vexing torments in my heart innate,
Leave then, for plaintes and teares are not in date.

No, no, if they could life in body hold;
VVcayē would weepe, we would buy teares for gold.

But vaine it is to kicke against a prickes
And sinne to take Gods scourge impatiently.
My debt to death, to pay I must not sticke,
For why, you know that all are borne to die,
Then must I yeeld, for ther's no remedie;

And pay my due that I on nature owe,
For time requires, and Gbd will haue it so.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The strongest Lyon, stoopes to conqu'ring death.
The aged oake, at length doth change his hue.
In time the long liv'd *Phoenix*, leefeth breath,
Thrice aged *Enoch*, yeeldes to natures due.
Sith then tis so, and what I saie is true.
And time doth trie that all things must deaie,
Then sure I know, I haue not long to staie.

Therefore marke well, the counsaile that I giue,
Revolute it in your mindes (my children deere)
For it shall most prevale (if that you liue)
VWhen friends and worldly goods you haue not heere,
First worship God, and to his lawes giue care.
Set him your load-starre, and your lampe of light,
His lawes the line to lead your liues aright.

Use diligence, in doing of your dueties,
To thole superiours (rulers over you)
Doe good to all, bend thereto all your studies.
Sing not the *Syrens* song, that proues vntrue,
Though trothlesse *Absalon*, be faire in view,
VWith *Jonathan*, doe faithfull still remaine,
Shun *Iswags* bloudie teares, and subtil braine.

Plaie not the cowards in your countreys good,
Spend in her canse, your deerest breath and wealth,
And though prosperitie hath you withstood,
And frowning world denies gal-sugred pelfe,
Be not dismayde, esteeme your heav'lie health.
For that shall yeeld you comfort in distresse,
VWhen world and friends, haue left you comfortlesse.

Fie

The constancie of Susanna.

Flie still aspiring mindes, yet seeke renowne,
VVin it by vertue, and by manly might,
Franke not rebellious flesh, but keepe it downe.
Like not those painted dames that doe delight,
Lyllies are fowle in smell, though faire in sight. (moane,
And though they rice with baites, with teeres,
Yet minde, that painted tombes, haue rotten bones.

My sonnes if you must liue, in wedlocke bandes,
Loue for vertue, and like the modest chaste.
Set neither fading beaury, goods nor landes,
Before that hue, that in the heart is plast.
Benevor prodigall, your goods to wast..
Learne with the busie ant, the way to liue,
Spare not to much, but doe by sparing thrue.

If you vwith childrens store, be blest of God,
His richest giftes account that pretie crew.
Enstruct and bring them vp, to feare the rod,
VWith those precepts your parents taught to you,
Though all things want, let them not want this due,
For sure (my sonnes) it is not saide for naught,
Better vnborne, then borne to liue vntaught.

Esteeme the wavering world as it is,
VWhere swiftest time, brings all things to decay.
Esteeme your selues, heere voide of ioies and blisse,
And thinke each morrow, is your ending day,
Desire of God on earth not long to stay.
VWhere nought but sin, & grieve doth reigne (be bold)
And nought is got, but sinne in waxing old.

The

The confancie of Susanna.

The little babe once comming to the birth,
Is borne as bare, and naked as my naile.
The puling wretch his wofull state on earth,
VVith tongue, and teeres, new born doth weep and wale.
To see his soule shut vp, in sinfull gaile.
And swadled lims, fast fettered round aboute.
Like captiuе wretche, that no way findeth out,

His childish actions all, vnperfect are,
To sit, to eat, to speake, to stand, to goe,
The childe is taught and nursed vp with care,
And pampered eke with paine, and wakefull woe,
He proues the pikes, of manie a pangue also.
VVith furious foes, he hath continuall warre,
His flesh this world and raging fiend they are.

His life is like, the raging seas recoile,
His choysest things, are in event but vaine,
His wealth is want, his rest is restlesse toile,
His health mishap, and all his pleasures paine,
His chiefe companions linked in one chaine.
Are hopelesse hope, deepe danger, care and feare,
VWhile dying life, doth dailie dread the beare.

He often times (beset with deepe distresse)
Doth call for death, before his dying daie.
And dead man like, by sleeping in excessse,
Doth spend the halfe, of precious time away,
The rest mispent in idlenesse or play.
Or spent to serve our owne occasions so,
As least we care, whear God haue part or noe

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus man is made, the pray and spoyle of time,
A tipe of misrie and mishap(God woot)
A sinke of sinfull-sin, an heap of crime.
A ship that still on billowing waues doth floate
When age comes on, then all his sences doat.
He waxeth deafe, his eies with dazing dimme,
His teeth corrupt, he hath no lively limme,

Can such a dying man, be sayd to liue?
What kind of life? what living call you this?
No life but death, a shade that life doth giue.
For perfect life, by death obtained is.
Whie then do mortall worldinges go amisse?
Whie love they life whie do they death detest?
Which sets them free from ill, and bringeth rest;

Hence learne(poore heartes) your life vncerteine is,
Still heaps of harmes, are hovering on your head.
keepe these my wordes, and feare to do amisse.
More would I say, but life is partly fled.
Whome death (with seely tryumph) doth downe tred;
Fare well (sweete ioyes) sometimes my heartes delight
The ground my corpes, to God I yeeld my spirite

Epi.



Epilogus.

Thus heere you see, how God preserveth hisse
And those that do them iniurize, confoundeth,
Hence may you learne, what t'is to live amisse,
What falles to him, that with proud sin abowndeth.
That hee which stedfast hope, in Gods helpe growndeth
Gainst him not hell, nor hel houndes shall preveile,
For God will help, when help of man doth faile,

F I N I S.

Faultes escaped.

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